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RUSSIAN PEOPLE IN THE GRIP OF AUTOCRACY
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# THE SOUL OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

BY

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

INTRODUCTION BY

VLADIMIR G. SIMKHOVITCH

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

M. R. H.

# PREFACE

THIS is not a history of revolutionary organizations, neither is it a history of revolutionary doctrines, nor a mere narrative of political events. The Russian revolution is more than the activities of revolutionary factions trying to apply their theories to political reality; it is more than a change in the forms of government or in the civic rights of the people. The Russian revolution is the awakening to self-consciousness of a great nation shaken to its very foundations; it is the groping of vast masses towards a new social, political and spiritual freedom far exceeding that contained in revolutionary programs. In this enormous movement of millions, revolutionary organizations are only vanguards, sometimes erring and misleading, sometimes lost in the maze of historic events; revolutionary doctrines are often feeble sparks vainly attempting to illuminate the windings of the historic road; the very victories and achievements of a political character appear to be only by-products of the gigantic mass-movement towards an unknown goal. To show *the Russian nation in action* from the very beginnings of mass-movement to the point of abolition of the old political régime; to trace the influence of economic conditions on the character and demeanor of the various social classes and groups; to point out the rôle of revolutionary organizations and revolutionary ideas in that momentous outburst of revolutionary power; to go back from the turmoil of political and social movements to the inner self of revolutionary individuals fairly representing their respective groups, and thus to gain a better understanding of the motives of the immense up-

heaval, was the task which the author attempted to approach.

The task is colossal. Scientific and artistic work of generations will be required to complete it. Not even in the Russian language have the various phases of the revolution been given adequate study. Many a field, such as the reflection of the revolution in Russian *belles lettres,* to which parts of this book are devoted, have not hitherto been investigated at all. Moreover, the work of a Russian writing in English is greatly embarrassed by the consciousness of the fact that the Russian character and Russian history are little familiar on this side of the Atlantic. Under such circumstances, the present work can be only a review of the great movement in its most significant manifestations, and an attempt to convey to the American reader a better understanding of the character, the motives and the aspirations of the various parts of the Russian nation engaged in the revolution.

In conclusion, I wish to express my deep gratitude to Professor Vladimir G. Simkhovitch for his suggestions and advice in connection with this work, and also for his aid in selecting the illustrations, most of which are reproduced from rare magazines in his private collection.

M. J. O.

New York,
*October* 26, 1917.

# INTRODUCTION

When we are reading about our own political affairs, a simple narrative of events may under circumstances suffice, for with the social and historical background, with the ideas, peculiarities, predilections, interests, purposes and hopes of the various sections and groups and classes of our own country we are presumably quite familiar. To the simple story of events we add our own knowledge of the background, we unconsciously supply the social psychology that is behind the events and which make these events intelligible to us.

Quite different is the situation when we are dealing with social and political events of a distant land, the social background of which we know anything but intimately. The mere narrative of the events, no matter how accurate, does not supply us with the means of understanding them. That is precisely the situation in which the English-reading world finds itself in regard to the Russian revolutionary movement. There are books that more or less accurately tell us the story of the Russian revolutionary movement; there are books that make an attempt to acquaint us with the various revolutionary theories. But the theories as well as the events are and remain uninterpreted, they are to be believed in as accurate statements but not to be understood as products of life. Nor is it exactly easy to analyze events and theories and present them as a part of the actual flow of life.

It was a task to be undertaken, if the English-reading world was really to appreciate the struggles of Revolu-

tionary Russia; that is why I suggested the scope of the present work to Mr. Olgin. And now that his labors are finished, I cannot help but admire the facility, charm and subtlety with which the difficult task has been accomplished. The reader will find the economic background as well as the ideas, events, theories, but he will find them, not as something apart from life, but as a part of life, as living forces; not as mere fragments, not as mere quotations without life's context, but as social-psychological processes which we can easily follow and understand.

The book divides itself in four parts. The first part contains a survey of the economic and social development of Russia prior to the revolution of 1905 and 1906. The second part is an account of the actual conflicts that culminated in the general strike of October, 1905, that induced Nicholas II to grant the October constitution. It depicts for us the revolutionary forces of the momentous upheaval of 1905-06. The third part is a novel attempt to interpret the Russian revolutionary movement by drawing on the rich realistic Russian literature, which so often portrayed the peasant, the intellectual, the bureaucrat and the varying revolutionary types.

The last section of the volume is devoted to the social and political events after 1907. It acquaints the reader with the reaction that followed the revolution of 1905, with the growing unrest just preceding the great world war, as well as with the events which culminated in the forced abdication of Nicholas II.

The style of the book, its ease and fluency, should not lead the reader to undervalue its scholarly nature. Though perhaps the most readable of all books on the revolution, it is nevertheless the most scientific that has so far appeared in the English language. I once heard of a German professor, who when asked whether he had

read the essays of Huxley, indignantly replied, " certainly not. My daughter can understand them! " Any one can understand this book—and incidentally the forces of the Russian Revolution.

VLADIMIR G. SIMKHOVITCH.

GREENWICH HOUSE,
*November, 1917.*

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 verst | is approximately | 0.66 mile |
| 1 dessatin | " | 2.70 acres |
| 1 pood | " | 36.11 pounds |
| 1 ruble | " | 50 cents |
| 1 copeck | " | 0.5 cent |

Dates are quoted in this book according to the Russian calendar, which is 13 days behind the accepted European calendar. Many dates have become historic and are deeply embedded in the Russian mind. January 9th and October 17th, for example, would lose their charm for the Russian ear if they were quoted as January 22nd and October 30th.

Of the twenty-six illustrations in this book, seventeen are reproductions from revolutionary magazines which appeared immediately after the revolution of 1905 and were in most cases suppressed by the censor. The artists usually withheld their names for fear of prosecution. These magazines are now very rare; less than a dozen copies exist of some of them.

The other illustrations are reproduced from paintings, photographs, and drawings widely circulated in Russia.

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# PART I

# SOCIAL FORCES

# CHAPTER I

## INDUSTRY

ENTERING a large Russian city twenty years ago, the traveler would have been amazed by its incongruities. He would have seen beautiful modern apartment-houses looming above dilapidated one-story frame structures half sunken into the ground. He would have ridden in comfortable electric street-cars through unpaved suburbs full of mud and foul puddles. He would have met in the main streets elegant ladies and gentlemen dressed after the latest Parisian fashion, side by side with barefooted peasants, men and women, wearing winter and summer alike their heavy sheepskin coats. He would have stayed in a luxurious hotel equipped with all modern improvements, and he would soon have learned that the city had neither a water nor a sewage system. He would have been able to send a telegram to Paris or London or a cable to San Francisco, but he could not have communicated with a nearby town. The telegraph station or the post-office would have been lacking.

Upon further observation, the traveler would have become aware that these incongruities were a characteristic feature of all Russian life. He would have found enormous steel-plants or paper-mills or cotton-factories in the vicinity of little villages where life was still untouched by civilization and ancient patriarchal habits cast their shadows over the minds of men. Railroad tracks were running over endless fields where century-old obsolete methods of agriculture were still being applied. The throb of far-off worlds was reaching half-

barbarous villagers, 80 per cent. of whom could not read or write.

It was the time when Russia was changing rapidly, strenuously, almost feverishly. A new, powerful ruler was striding in seven-league boots over the vast plains of the Empire, shaking people from their indolent dreams, destroying ancient bonds, creating new life in quiet corners, stirring, encouraging, luring. It was the spirit of Capitalism. It was the new industrial development destined to break the walls between Russia and the Western world and to do away with old idols.

The center of social gravity was moving from rural Russia into the towns, from the mansions of the cultured nobility to the industrial centers. The urban population was growing very quickly, especially in the West and the South. The city of Ekaterinoslav, in 1867, had a population of 19,908; thirty years later the population was 121,216. In 1867 the population of Lodz was 32,437; in 1897 it grew to 315,209, an increase of 872 per cent. Baku counted in 1867 13,992 inhabitants; in 1897 the number increased to 112,253. Some cities grew on a truly American scale. Ivanovo-Vosnesensk was in 1867 a small town with a population of 1,350; after becoming a center of the textile industry it counted, in 1897, 53,949, an increase of over 3,896 per cent. The total number of cities with a population of 50,000 to 100,000 was, in 1867, twelve; in 1897, thirty-seven; the population of this class of cities grew from 834,000 to 2,401,000 (Table 1).

Rural Russia was migrating from the village to the large city because the latter offered more opportunities for making a living. Industry and commerce were increasing by leaps and bounds. "The industrial spirit penetrated all classes of the population in Southern Russia," states the official *Finance-Courier* in 1897. "All other interests became of secondary importance. The growth of industry is marked not by decades, but

by periods of two to three years. In the last two years the industrial aspect of Southern Russia has completely changed."

Iron and steel are the backbone of the industrial system all over the world. The growth of the iron and steel industry in Russia indicated a vigorous development of the entire industrial body. Between 1850 and 1877 the yearly increase in the production of cast-iron amounted to only 6,500 tons; between 1887 and 1897 the increase averaged 125,000 tons yearly. The tempo of the steel and iron output between 1887 and 1898 can be seen from the following table.

TOTAL PRODUCTION OF IRON AND STEEL IN RUSSIA

| Years | Cast-Iron | | Iron | | Steel (in ready products) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Tons | Value in Rubles | Tons | Value in Rubles | Tons | Value in Rubles |
| 1887 | 594,000 | 25,405,000 | 362,000 | 35,338,000 | 157,000 | 22,094,000 |
| 1897 | 1,848,000 | 77,731,000 | 499,000 | 50,033,000 | 920,000 | 125,942,000 |
| 1898 | 2,199,000 | 93,969,000 | 488,000 | 48,930,900 | 1,145,000 | 156,742 000 |

The value of the cast-iron produced in 1898 was nearly 3.75 times greater than the value of the yield of 1887. The value of steel-products manufactured in Russia increased more than seven times. The construction of machines made considerable headway during those years. Russia began to manufacture steam-boilers, steam-engines, turbines, kerosene-motors, weaving-looms, apparatuses and machines for flour-mills, sugar-works, distilleries and breweries. The construction of dynamo-electric machines, electric motors and telegraph devices was also making rapid progress.

The main consumers of iron- and steel-products were the railroads. Nothing so much as the construction of railroads marked the transition from the old "natural state" into a new era of enterprise and swift changes. At that time one could hardly speak of a railway-system or a railway-net in Russia. Solitary lines were slowly

advancing into dreamy regions where hitherto nobody was in a hurry and where the old proverb ran, "Work is not a wolf, it won't escape into the woods." But the lines did advance, incessantly, persistently, with fatal tenacity. The last decade of the nineteenth century especially was astir with the spirit of railway-construction.

NEW LINES BUILT IN RUSSIA 1892-1901

| Years | Versts |
|---|---|
| 1892 | 453 |
| 1893 | 1,584 |
| 1894 | 1,825 |
| 1895 | 1,886 |
| 1896 | 2,801 |
| 1897 | 1,937 |
| 1898 | 2,892 |
| 1899 | 4,914 |
| 1900 | 2,756 |
| 1901 | 3,338 |

The mileage of the Russian railways *doubled* between 1890 and 1897. The number of locomotives and passenger and freight cars increased accordingly. Water-transportation was also steadily developing. Between 1890 and 1895, 715 steamships for river-navigation were built; between 1896 and 1899, 631. "All this, coupled with the accelerated construction of the navy, created a large demand for products of the iron-industry, which fact, in its turn, reflected upon the mining of iron-ore and coal. A speedy construction of new plants, new blast-furnaces, an enlargement of the old, began. The lumber business, the production of bricks, cement, glass, rapidly developed. On the other hand, the oil-industry, growing fast and supplying not only the internal market, but also an increasing demand abroad, caused a greater expansion of the building trade. Oil-wells, oil-plants were being constructed; a large flotilla of oil-carriers was built on the Caspian Sea; numerous carriers appeared on the Volga. Mechanical and chemical plants supplying the oil-industry were being enlarged or built anew. The growth of the cities, especially in the South, necessitated

a feverish construction of new houses and reconstruction of the old; tramways were being laid, telephones and electric light installed, water and sewage systems constructed. The expansion of the building trade hastened the development of means of production. At the same time, the production of consumers' goods was making progress." *

The "black diamond" was driving its triumphal chariot over a country covered with immense stretches of forest. Here are a few figures showing the increase in the moving of coal.

Coal Extracted in Russia

| Years | Tons | Value in Rubles |
|---|---|---|
| 1887..... | 4,534,000 | 13,839,000 |
| 1897..... | 11,203,000 | 38,945,000 |
| 1898..... | 12,219,000 | 44,760,000 |

The average yearly increase in the production of coal between 1855 and 1877 was about 74,000 tons; between 1887 and 1897 it was 667,000. But this expansion could not satisfy the increasing demand for coal, and the import was growing. In 1887, 1,638,000 tons of coal were imported into Russia, in 1897 the import amounted to 2,719,000 tons, being somewhat less than 25 per cent. of the coal extracted from the Russian mines.

A similar development marked the oil-industry.

Oil Produced in Russia

| Years | Tons | Value in Rubles |
|---|---|---|
| 1887..... | 2,733,000 | 5,006,000 |
| 1897..... | 7,831,000 | 36,558,000 |
| 1898..... | 8,304,000 | 49,686,000 |

Turning to the textile-industry we find there also a considerable advance, especially in the production of cotton-goods. Between 1887 and 1897 the output of cotton-goods in Russia increased from 231.7 millions to 430.2 millions of rubles. The quantity of cotton-goods also

* A. Finn-Yenotayevski, *Economic Life of Modern Russia*, pp. 49-50.

shows a great improvement. The Russian spinneries are now able to produce fine threads of a high grade, also for sewing, and they compete successfully with English manufacturers. Russia has even begun to export cotton-goods to her Asiatic neighbors. But the main market for such goods is rural Russia, where the peasant swiftly changes his picturesque crude wool and linen for the cheap fustian and calico.

Reviewing *all* branches of Russian industry and mining (Table 2), we can form an opinion as to the changes which the country was undergoing towards the end of the nineteenth century. In 1887 the total production of Russian industry and mining was *1.3 billions of rubles*, in 1897 it was *2.8 billions*. The average yearly increase between 1887 and 1890 was 56 millions, between 1893 and 1897, 276 millions of rubles. This may not appear very large in comparison with England or America, but for Russia it was an unheard-of progress. Those were revolutionary times in Russian economic life. A wave of energy, a spirit of bold adventure was abroad. Capital hurried from Germany, Belgium and other countries to share in the high profits. In the metallurgic industry, profits of 100 per cent. were not unusual. Stock companies oftentimes paid as much as 20 per cent. in dividends. Promoters were active everywhere, from the somber northern Petersburg to the hot sun-kissed Odessa. The development of this form of enterprise can be seen from the following table.

STOCK COMPANIES IN RUSSIA

| Years | Number of New Companies Chartered | Capital Stock (in Millions of Rubles) |
|---|---|---|
| 1893..... | 55 | 56.6 |
| 1894..... | 64 | 57.6 |
| 1895..... | 78 | 77.6 |
| 1896..... | 127 | 180.7 |
| 1897..... | 136 | 187.5 |
| 1898..... | 204 | 236.1 |
| 1899..... | 305 | 341.4 |

A River-wharf in a Provincial Town

A Street in a Province Capital

In 1900, the total number of stock companies, excluding railroads, was 1,700, with a capital stock of 2.1 billions of rubles; 1,450 of those companies were engaged in industrial enterprises, and 250 in commerce, banking, insurance and transportation.

Now, let us interrupt our survey of the economic developments,—a survey necessarily brief and incomplete,—and ask ourselves what all this meant for the social structure of the Russian people. " Industry," " Mining," " Commerce," " Banking,"—these are not mere abstractions. They are activities of men. They create relations between human beings. They influence character and human ideas. They are forces modeling and reshaping society.

The advent of Capitalism in Russia meant the appearance of new social groups. The modern captain of industry, the modern financier, the company-promoter, the railroad-magnate began to play an ever increasing rôle in Russian life. Factories and mills needed engineers, mechanics, managers, clerks and hosts of other professional people massing in the cities. In commerce, the new trader, efficient in business-methods, looking for large markets, established himself firmly. All these groups breathed a spirit of self-assurance and self-reliance unknown to the business-man of former generations. The merchant or factory-owner of yore was a very humble creature. He willingly admitted the supremacy of the landed class and the bureaucracy. The new capitalistic man of affairs thinks himself and his class the salt of the earth. *Class-consciousness* begins to unite the individuals of the various capitalistic groups. The modern business-man considers himself by no means less important than the owner of land. The splendor of millions is perhaps brighter in his eyes than the radiance of an ancient title. The administrative machine, in his opinion, is not an end in itself, but only a means of securing law and order indispensable for economic growth. The

business-man is inclined to think that *he* is the main figure in life. He amasses wealth; he creates opportunities for millions; he raises a country to a higher level among nations. He has to be helped and honored and encouraged.

With the appearance of new social groups, Russia becomes less provincial. The large business-man thinks in *national* terms. The barometer of the stock-exchange in Petersburg or Moscow is keenly felt in the Caucasus, in Crimea, on the slopes of the Ural. The political issues, internal and international, causing the oscillations of the barometer, are by no means an indifferent matter. The business-man thinks of the whole country as his market, his actual or prospective domain. In this he is far superior to the landlord, who is necessarily attached to one spot and whose horizon is limited.

It was inevitable that sooner or later the industrial classes would clash with the archaic political order. Industry was growing, expanding. Industry needed "room! room to turn round in, to breathe and be free." And this room it could not always have under the old régime. Industry wanted affairs to run smoothly, and this it was denied under the rule of a rigid bureaucratic machine.

Here is one of the causes of the Great Revolution.

## CHAPTER II

### LABOR

In the folds of the new economic organization a new class was forming, steadily gaining in scope and purpose; and as a body is followed by its shadow, the growth of this class was followed by disturbance and social unrest. This was the class of industrial workmen. In former decades, the factory workman of Russia was half wage-earner and half independent peasant, tied to his piece of land and the village of his fathers. The new era saw large numbers of wage-earners entirely disconnected from the land, living in cities and relying wholly upon industrial labor. Some of them were still in the habit of leaving their factories in summer-time and going into the country to work on farms. But this was only a way of changing one kind of hired labor for another. In the main, the workmen looked upon themselves as city folk, they acquired city habits and felt a certain contempt for the crude, uncouth peasant.

According to the census of 1897, the number of workmen engaged in industry, mining and transportation was 3,000,000 (Table 3). In the few following years this number considerably increased. The concentration of labor in industry was going on very fast. In 1890 there were only 108 factories in Russia employing 1,000 workmen or more, with a total number of 226,200 workmen; in 1902 the number of factories of this class was 261 and the number of workmen 626,500 (Table 4). Monster plants with 10,000 workmen are now not unusual in Russia. Such were the steel-plants of Hughes, Pastuchov and others in the Donetz region, and some of the textile manufactories. In 1879 there was only one textile manu-

factory with over 5,000 workmen; in 1894 the number of such manufactories was eight (Table 5).

In Petersburg, Moscow, Yekaterinoslav, Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, Lodz, the new type of skilled laborer had become an essential part of the city population. His needs were far above the needs of the primitive peasant. His views were greatly influenced by the spirit of modern cities. He was striving towards a better standard of living. He had now self-respect—perhaps his greatest achievement. He knew how to read and write—or was quickly learning. He had a desire for better clothes and a " decent " appearance. He wished to spend his leisure hours in clean and healthy surroundings. But all this was in crass contrast to the conditions of his work, and the pay he received was a mockery of his dreams of a respectable life.

Data collected by the factory-inspectors in 1900-1901 concerning 1,275,102 workers in 12,702 industrial enterprises, give the average earnings of a male adult worker as 242 rubles a year, or 20 rubles a month,—scarcely $2.50 a week. These data show that even the aristocracy of the working-class, the metal-workers and the constructors of machinery, received not more than 342 rubles a year, or $3.30 a week, while at the bottom of the scale we find nearly 600,000 workers in the textile industry receiving from 140 to 180 rubles a year, or from $1.35 to $1.73 a week (Table 6). But even these workers were not the worst off. The reports of the factory-inspectors contain instances of girls working in cigarette-case factories for two to four rubles a month, or in tobacco-factories for 2.5 rubles a month. The wages of a cigarette maker, according to these reports, never exceeded nine rubles a month, or $1.10 a week.

This was the economic foundation of the life of the worker. If we turn now to his legal position, we find no brighter picture. Collective bargaining was forbidden by law. Strikes were criminal acts. Participation in a

strike was punishable by two to four months' imprisonment; agitation in favor of a strike by a double term. Individual breach of contract on the side of the workman was punishable by one month's imprisonment, while the employer breaking contract with his employee was only fined. The law of June 2, 1897, limited the work-day for male adults to 11.5 hours, but overtime was permitted, the law was actually in abeyance, and the usual work-day was twelve hours, if not more. The employees had the right to complain to the factory-inspectors. Such complaints, however, were of no avail, the inspectors being bureaucratic officials who paid very little attention to the workmen, the latter being in no position to back up their demands by a representative organization. Besides, individual complaints were extremely risky, the complainer usually losing his job and having little hope of getting another.

Life in the factories was appalling. Sanitary conditions were very primitive, to say the least. Legally, the employer was obliged to provide his employees with medical aid, which was of special importance in factories situated outside of cities. The reports for 1899, however, show that, out of 19,292 factories under the control of the factory-inspection, 15,804 had no arrangements for medical aid whatsoever, while the remaining 3,488 which employed nurses or physicians seldom gave their workmen really adequate and efficient medical aid. As to health-insurance or special workmen-compensation laws, they were totally unknown in Russia.

If the legal status of the workers was bad, their practical condition was worse. There was something of the spirit of slavery in the Russian factory of that time. The writer of these lines had an opportunity to study the life of several paper-mills, porcelain-manufactories, sugar-refineries and glass-works in the Southwest twenty years ago. The general attitude of the employer towards his employees in those factories was that of a benefactor

extending his charity to the poor. The workmen were treated like so many beggars who must be grateful for whatever they got. The tone of the factory administration was harsh, coarse, insulting. Slapping a workman's face was by no means a rare occurrence; and it was the common practice to search the workers, men and women alike, on leaving the factory-premises, though this was strictly forbidden by law. The laws were not much of a hindrance to the employers of that time. The local police and local authorities were, as a rule, on the best terms with the factory-owners and in no hurry to enforce unpleasant laws.

Of course, one thing must be borne in mind: the cost of living was comparatively low and the requirements of the Russian working population were by no means equal to those of English or American workingmen. But even from the standpoint of a Russian wage-earner, the situation was quite intolerable. In 1900, there were 715,-497 miners in Russia, according to official figures. In none of the mines was the work-day less than twelve hours, and the sanitary conditions were more than unsatisfactory. No proper ventilation, no regular water pumping, no arrangements for drying the clothes of the workmen were provided. Wet to the bone, suffocating from the smoke of the kerosene lamps and the underground gases, the miners toiled for a miserable wage. Safety devices were very rare. In many Ural mines not even elevators were used, the workers being compelled to climb ladders. As to the barracks, where the miners spent their free hours, they hardly deserved the name of human habitations.

> "Damnèd be the life of miners!
> Day and night we toil and suffer,
> Just as criminals in prison.
> Day and night the candle smoulders
> And we carry death on shoulders,"—

this is part of a song widely spread among the Southern miners.

Factories outside cities, and even factories situated in populous towns, had special barracks constructed for the workmen. The writer of these lines visited, in 1903, the barracks of the Nobel Brothers' Oil Plant in Baku, Caucasus. The manager of the plant was proud of the barracks, their cleanliness and their order. In reality, the inside of the barracks was a depressing sight. Gloomy rooms with low ceilings; wooden benches instead of beds; barren gray walls covered with soot from the smoky kerosene lamps; stale air, dirty floors, filthy little pillows on the benches, and the intolerable odor of sweat and unclean lavatories,—of such were the "model barracks" of a large modern plant. In many instances the conditions were still worse.

"The sanitary and hygienic conditions of the Russian factories are horrible," says Professor Tugan-Baranovski. "Only a few factories have dormitories for their workmen, and what kind of dormitories! Men, women and children sleep side by side on wooden benches, in damp, sultry and crowded barracks, sometimes in cellars, often in rooms without windows. Most of the factories have no dormitories at all. After a work-day of twelve, thirteen or fourteen hours, the workmen lie down to sleep in the workshop itself, on stands, bench-boards, or tables, putting some rags under their heads. This is often the case even in shops where dyes and chemicals are used that impair the workmen's health even in work-time." *

The workmen living in barracks or in the workshops were more dependent on their employers than those who could afford separate rooms or flats. They usually received their wages in kind, from the grocery and the butcher-shop belonging to the employer. If they were disagreeable to their masters they could easily be thrown out of their dwelling-places.

But even those who lived outside of the factory-grounds were far from possessing a minimum of comfort.

* M. Tugan-Baranovski, *Russian Factory*, 3d edition, p. 407.

In 1899 the city administration of Moscow collected data about 15,922 flats in the industrial quarters of the town, which rented rooms or parts of rooms to subtenants. The population of these flats amounted to 174,622, or eleven per flat, while 12,650 of the "flats" consisted of *one room only!* The tenants rented "stalls," i.e., portions of rooms separated by partitions which did not reach the ceiling; they rented corners, single beds and all available space. The average rent for a "stall" was 5 rubles, 93 copecks a month; the average rent for a bed, 2 rubles, 22 copecks. The remarks of the investigators give us vivid pictures of these flats. "The air is hot and stale," we read in one account, "the rooms incredibly crowded. The flat is damp and exceedingly dirty. Two rooms are totally dark. The ceiling is very low; a tall man can hardly stand upright. The odor is foul." . . . "The sight of the flat is horrifying," states another investigator; "the plaster has crumbled down, the walls are full of holes and stuffed with rags. Everything is filthy. The stove is a mere ruin. There are legions of cockroaches and bed-bugs. It is cold. The lavatory is in a dangerous position, and children are not permitted to go there. All the flats of the house are in a similar condition." . . . "The atmosphere is suffocating," remarks a third investigator. "The exhalations of the people, the evaporations of wet clothes and dirty linen fill the air. The walls are wet; cold draughts blow from everywhere. When it is raining, the water covers the floors, two inches deep." *

In these flats there lived, not tramps, not pariahs, not beggars, but people with a steady occupation, renting their abodes for a certain time and anxious to have their private corner. These flats were occupied by factory-workers, artisans and their apprentices, cabmen, common laborers, petty merchants, salespeople, domestic

* *Bulletin of the Moscow City Council,* Oct., 1902. Cited by Pashitnov, *The Working-Class in Russia,* pp. 127-130.

servants, railroad-clerks and the families of all these people. No, there were no idlers in the crowded tenement houses. They gave shelter to an able, vigorous working-population, ready to toil in the sweat of their brow and dreaming of a comfortable, " decent " life.

But could their dreams come true with an average of 20 rubles a month in wages and 5 rubles, 93 copecks in rent for a dark " stall "?

The industrial workmen were full of unrest.

In spite of legal penalties, in spite of severe prosecutions, the workingmen often revolted. Sometimes their revolt took the form of savage mob outbursts. The rioters smashed the windows of their factory, or put the hated foreman on a push-cart and carried him, with yells and shouts, outside of the factory-gate. Sometimes they would go so far as to damage the machinery. But these were comparatively rare occurrences. The usual expression of dissatisfaction was a peaceful strike.

It may be doubted whether political freedom and a right of organization would have radically changed the position of the workmen. Their low standard was mainly due to the backward condition of the country, to undeveloped industry, to the primitiveness of the life of the rural districts where the industrial workmen were recruited. It may further be doubted whether the workingmen in the 'nineties had a clear idea as to the relation between their position and the political order of the country. But there is no doubt that the workmen *were* dissatisfied, that they *did* go on strike time and again, and that these strikes, unorganized as they were, were a source of bitter annoyance to the Russian administration.

It was as a result of these strikes that labor laws were often introduced and the government tried to limit the arbitrary power of the employers. In 1886 there were strikes in the provinces of Moscow and Vladimir. The Minister of the Interior, Count Tolstoi, took the initiative of regulating contract-relations between employers

and employees. In a memorandum addressed to the Minister of Finance he says, " Investigations by the local administration of the causes of the aforesaid labor strikes disclosed that they threatened to assume the character of serious disturbances and that they were due primarily to the lack in our legislation of general regulations as to the mutual relations between employers and workmen. This gap in our legislation, which results in a lack of uniformity in the rules of the various factories, enables the employers to issue arbitrary regulations detrimental to the workmen, and puts the latter in a very unfavorable position."

The " gap " was filled in by the regulations of June 3, 1886, fixing the order of concluding and dissolving a contract, prohibiting payment in kind, fixing pay-days, etc. But the laws were not enforced, and the workmen had no way of offering resistance. They resorted to strikes.

In 1896 a great wave of strikes swept Petersburg. The largest textile manufactories, employing over 30,000 workmen, stopped. The strike was, to a certain extent, organized. One hundred strike leaders, meeting secretly, formulated demands which were presented to the employers. The strike was lost after three weeks, but the government became very restless. The workmen of Petersburg and other industrial centers were now more self-assured and self-reliant. They saw their power and began to appreciate concerted action. They were now more willing to listen to the propaganda of the Social-Democratic agitators, groups and circles of whom had been busy in Russia ever since the 'eighties. In 1897 the various groups united under the name of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, which issued large quantities of secret literature and steadily gained influence over the workers.

This combination of the Labor movement with the Social-Democratic propaganda, was very distasteful to

the administration. On June 2, 1897, it issued a new law limiting the work-day to 11.5 hours, yet the prosecution for strikes increased. The intention of the administration was to appear before the workmen in the rôle of a protector against the exploitation of the employers. But it was very difficult to play a rôle of this kind while remaining on good terms with the employers and discouraging any attempt at organization on the part of the employees. The new law did not abate the unrest of the workmen.

On June 10, 1903, the government allowed the workmen to have factory representatives of their own, called "monitors," to deal with the employers. The motives of this new law are made clear in the report of the Imperial Council for 1902-03. "The workingmen," it states, "having no right of combined action, found that there was no legal way to express their common needs. It is only natural, therefore, that when peace is disturbed owing to these needs, such as the scale of wages or the length of work-day, the more turbulent personages usually step to the front, and political agitation uses this circumstance for its own purpose. In view of these facts, the Ministry of Finance has decided to establish a representation of the workers in the person of special monitors."

This representation, however, was made dependent upon the consent of the employer. The workmen were allowed to elect monitors only in factories where the employers were not opposed to such representation. The monitor could be discharged just as easily as any of his constituency, and meetings or unions of workmen were still tabooed, perhaps more so than in previous years.

The government *tried* to appease the workmen, but its measures were all half-hearted and could never gain the confidence of labor. The measures looked very imposing —on paper; in some respects the labor legislation of Russia was even more advanced than that of Western Europe—in the statute books. The workmen, however,

knew very little of statute books, and they knew very well the actual situation. And the situation was that of freedom for the employer and fierce restrictions for the employee.

There was no peace in the industrial quarters. In the meantime the Socialists were incessantly doing their underground work, coming in close contact with an increasing number of workmen, organizing revolutionary circles, calling sceret meetings, spreading leaflets and proclamations and over and over again using the concrete conditions of the shops as a starting-point for the development of their abstract ideas. The secret police was very active, but repressive measures alone could not stop the agitation.

As early as 1898, a Russian administrator struck upon a splendid idea. Why not try to divert the economic movement of the workmen from political channels? Why not try to compete with the revolutionary groups in organizing labor on the basis of everyday needs?

It was Trepov, chief of police in Moscow, who on April 8, 1898, in a memorandum presented to the head of the Police Department, called attention to the growing influence of the Social-Democrats among the workmen. This was possible, he stated, only because the Social-Democrats touched the most vital points in the life of labor,—the immediate needs and requirement. "Should not the government," he asks, "wrest this very effective weapon from the hands of the revolutionists and take upon itself the accomplishment of the same task? So long as the revolutionist preaches pure Socialism, we can cope with him through repressive measures; when be begins, however, to make use of the small defects in the existing legal order, repressive measures alone are not sufficient; the very ground on which he stands must be torn from under his feet." *

What had to be done? The government, through its

* V. Svyatlovski, *The Labor Movement in Russia*, p. 75.

secret agents, had to approach the laboring masses and organize them in loyal groups and circles. "The government has to show the workman a legal way out of the difficulties of his situation," says Trepov. "Then the Socialist agitator will be able to entice only the youngest and most energetic part of the crowd, while the average workman will prefer a less splendid, but safer legal way."

This "legal way," however, did not mean the establishment of freedom of strikes or freedom of labor unions. No. The "legal way" meant the granting of some privileges to loyal labor circles by special favor of the administration. The "legal way" in itself was illegal.

Sergius Zubatov, chief of the secret police in Moscow, was the first to put this theory into practice. Under his auspices, the Council of Workers in the Mechanical Trades of Moscow was established (1901). The Council had to care for the interests of labor, at the same time scrupulously avoiding any allusion to the existing political order. The Council had to be a safety-valve for the spirit of dissatisfaction in the ranks of labor. Improvements in the conditions of the workmen had to be obtained not by legislative measures, but by the leniency of the administration (similar organizations were established by the same Zubatov in Minsk and a few other centers).

The results were surprising. Large masses of workmen poured into the new organization. They did not know of the forces backing this organization. They knew only that here was a place where they could discuss their needs, where they could formulate their demands and where they were safe from police invasions. They gave the Council a character totally different from the ideas of its creator. "The result of the establishment of the new organization," state the factory-inspectors, "was *a series of strikes* far greater in number than any experienced

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before, together with a tremendous, unprecedented influx of complaints."

The attempt failed. The unrest did not cease. "Loyal channels" were futile where nothing could be obtained through these "channels" but floods of friendly words from agents-provocateurs. Zvolyanski, the chief of the Police Department, bitterly complained: "The Ministry of the Interior allowed these organizations to be established in order to divert the workmen from the anti-governmental propaganda. This was the case at the beginning. . . . In the course of time, however, the Moscow administration became powerless to stop the movement; it could not stop outsiders from taking part in the conduct of strikes in the various factories and shops. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, found these organizations to be illegal, but their elimination was now recognized as impossible." *

"He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made." All attempts to reconcile the labor-class with the existing order failed. Labor was disheartened, restless; labor had nothing to lose, possessing, as it did, no established organizations, no offices, no trades unions' treasuries and no improvement which it would be afraid to endanger. It was much simpler for labor to go on strike in Russia than in Western Europe. Russian labor was "free."

With the development of industry, crises began to be felt both by capital and labor. The crisis of 1899-1900 was especially severe. Here is a letter from Lodz, published in *Syn Otechestva* early in 1900:

"The crisis, like a terrific hurricane, has swept Lodz. It has spared nobody, it has made no exemptions. Some are only slightly touched and their injuries are not severe, some are bruised and battered, and many have been destroyed and buried under the débris. It is a great battle-

* T. Ch. Ozerov, *Politics in the Labor Problem*, p. 237.

field after the battle. When you walk along the Petrokovskaya street, you see gloomy drawn faces, haggard looks, hosts of victims. All these restless men, with sad eyes and drooping heads, have just closed or are about to close their shops and factories. They wander about like so many shadows, unable to get hold of themselves after the terrible blow. And what has become of the workmen of the closed shops? Nothing; they are here, on the same streets, blocking the pavements, not knowing what to begin."

The crisis of 1899-1900 was full of disaster for industry and labor in Warsaw, Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, Nishni-Novgorod, Tula, Baku, the Donetz region, the Kiev sugar area, on the Volga, etc. With no labor unions, no unemployment insurance, no aid from city administration, the workingmen in times of crisis were utterly unprotected. This increased their bitter resentment against the political order. Labor was inclined to think absolutism the cause of *all* its misery, all its destitution.

Strikes, although forbidden by law, became an everyday occurrence. The number of strikes and strikers in comparison with those of other countries is given in the following table.

NUMBER OF STRIKES IN TEN YEARS (1895-1904) *

| Countries | Number of Strikes | Number of Strikers | Number of days lost (in millions) |
|---|---|---|---|
| England | 4,533 | 1,270,864 | 43.5 |
| France | 1,998 | 301,456 | 4.3 |
| Austria | 1,187 | 240,072 | 2.9 |
| Italy | 982 | 294,519 | 3.0 |
| Russia | 1,765 | 431,254 | 2.1 |

The average number of workmen participating in each strike was smaller than in England or in Italy and the average duration of a strike was shorter than in any

* Varsar, *Strike Statistics,* pp. 1-4.

other country. But in frequency of strikes, Russia exceeded all other countries but England.

It lay in the nature of Russian political life that a strike for an increase in wages or an improvement in shop conditions necessarily became a political strike. The government considered every social movement, every expression of unrest as shaking the foundations of its power. It tried to bribe the workmen, it tried to show them a smiling face, it tried even to play " organization "; but behind these smiles, behind the mask of paternal care was the grim countenance of autocracy disturbed and frightened by a new growing force it could not command. The average workingman did not reason, but he was full of the spirit of rebellion, and with reality cruelly staring at him from every side, he was not to be deceived.

Labor was one of the main sources of the Great Revolution.

# CHAPTER III

## RURAL RUSSIA

We shall now leave the noisy cities with their crowded streets, the din of their factories, the crash of speeding cars and the haste and nervous tension of modern industrial life. We shall direct our steps to one of those quiet poetic villages situated a few hundred miles from the province town, dreaming over a beautiful lake or bathing in sunshine on the banks of a rippling river. After all, Russia was, and is now, in the main an agricultural country; 80 per cent. of her population derived their income from agricultural work. And if Odessa or Baku or Ivanovo-Vosnesensk were the symbol of the coming, the milestones of a new development destined to change the face of holy Russia, the small villages under thatched or shingled roofs were the symbol of the existing, the mainstays of the entire economic structure.

It is not easy to reach a distant village. After several hours in the train we arrive at a railroad station located in the midst of a deserted field. All seems asleep in and around the little station. It takes time and trouble to find a peasant ready to drive us to the village of our destination. The road is unpaved. Mud-holes and slippery declivities make the travel uncomfortable in rainy weather; clouds of dust envelop the vehicle on a fair day.

Hour after hour passes. We have ample time to look around. What a dreary sight! Meager fields, thin grasses, consumptive little groves, black or gray bare hillocks in the midst of growing crops. And the general tone—so subdued, so monotonous, so full of melancholy. And yet, the soil seems to be rich; riotous masses of vegetation might easily spring up from this bountiful

ground; and the broad, unlimited prospect might brighten into a symphony of color.

Here, at last, is the village. As we approach it closely it looks far less poetic than from a bird's-eye view through the window of a passing train. Dark log cabins rise from the bare ground like so many heaps of gray dust. Something crude, decaying and unwholesome breathes from the whole scene. Thin faces, emaciated frames, stooped backs, unshapely figures, worn-out clothes, mud, dirt, wet walls. . . .

No, let us not give the impression that we are prejudiced against village life. Let us quote a writer who was for many years the standard-bearer of the old régime and by no means inclined to exaggerate the misery of rural Russia. "Let us enter a village," he says, "and look upon it with the eyes of modern, cultivated people. The roads are deep in mud, often rendering them impassable. Near the houses there are no trees, no bushes to rest your eyes on. The horse-pond is close to the well, and the dung oozes into it. In the courtyards everything is filthy, the odor quite intolerable. The cattle in their inclosure stand knee-deep in excrement. The entrance room and the living-room are black from neglect, and the floors are strewn with the excrements of poultry. In winter, the living-room is shared with pigs, sheep, geese; sometimes the cow is also placed here to get warm (an English traveler wondered at the low demands of a Russian cow, that it was able to endure such a room). Still, where there are cattle the lowest pitch of poverty has not been reached. In the same room, a baby crawls on the floor with a potato in its hands. Cockroaches, bedbugs, fleas infest the rooms in legions, and the heads, beards, mustaches and even eyebrows of grown-up men are filled with the most hideous insects. "Well, 'tis nothing" . . . Everything is so utterly foul, there is not a spot where you could lie down. . . . The mark of evil taste and barbarism is stamped on

By I. I. Levitan.

A Russian Landscape

By K. Kryzhitzki.

A Landlord's Mansion

everything, on the household, on the devastated natural surroundings." *

Mr. Menshikov is perhaps too severe in his condemnation of the Russian peasant, though the picture he draws is true. It was not the peasant's fault that his life was branded with barbarism and bad taste, and that his natural surroundings became devastated. It was *poverty* that lent this grim aspect to rural Russia.

But how was it possible? How could it have come to pass that a race of industrious people living on a rich soil and having very moderate wants, were so poverty-stricken? The causes are many, and they lead us as far back as 1861, the year of the abolition of serfdom.

Prior to 1861, the peasant communities had no land of their own. Legally, the land belonged to the landlord, of whom the peasants themselves were the private property. Each estate was divided into two unequal parts, one remaining in the hands of the owner as his private possession, the other being granted to the peasant community as the source of its sustenance. Both parts were tilled by the peasants, the assumption being that labor on the first part was an equivalent for the right of holding the second. Thus, the labor-week of the peasant usually consisted of three days' work for himself and three days for the landlord, sometimes the relation being two to four. The peasants were unfree; they could not leave their village or change their owner or refuse to obey the orders of the landlord. But the landlord himself was also unfree: he could not leave his peasants to their own fate, he had to provide them with land sufficient for a scant living, and it was against his own economic interests to have them on the verge of starvation. The proverbial saying of the peasants, "We are thine, and thou art ours," is an apposite expression of the relation between serf and landlord.

* M. Menshikov, *Letters to My Neighbors,* November, 1905, pp. 521-22.

When it became evident that the archaic system of serfdom was incompatible with the future development of Russian economic life, and the government saw fit to yield to public opinion demanding the abolition of serfdom (a demand backed by numerous revolts of peasants themselves, which justified the remark of one of Russia's statesmen, "Let us free the peasants from above, or else they will free themselves from below"), the question arose as to what should be the economic status of the freed peasants. Should the entire land remain in possession of the landlord, and the peasants become "free as the wind" without any land-property but their houses, as the extreme reactionary faction among the nobles desired? Should the peasants retain that part of the land which they were holding under serfdom, as was the view of the more liberal factions? Or should the land of the peasant communities be *increased* in comparison with what they were holding under serfdom, as the extreme left groups insisted upon? In the latter case, should the peasants receive their land free of charge, or should they pay the landlords for whatever land passed from their hands into those of their former slaves?

The government decided upon a set of measures that met the expectations and wishes of the landlords far more than the interests of the peasants. The law of February 19, 1861, abolishing the personal dependence of the villagers upon the landlords, put the peasants under a double economic strain: parts of the former holdings of the peasants were to be returned to the landlords; for the remaining parts the peasants had to pay exorbitant prices.

Now, the holdings of the peasants prior to 1861 were by no means very extensive. In fact, the peasants were scarcely able to subsist even under former conditions. Hardly any portion of their holdings could be taken away without undermining the very foundations of their existence. Yet, in twenty-one out of thirty-six central

Russian provinces, 26.2 per cent. of the area held by the peasants was cut off and returned to the landlords; in many provinces, where the soil was especially fertile and agriculture formed the main occupation of the population, the portions cut off were considerably larger. Thus, in the provinces of Poltava and Yekaterinoslav they extended to 40 per cent., in the province of Saratov 41 per cent., in the province of Samara 44 per cent. of the former peasants' holdings. In other words, if a peasant in the province of Poltava had lived on ten acres of land as a serf, he had now to live as a free man on six acres only. In the other fifteen provinces, where the land was less fertile and industry played a greater part, the portions cut off amounted to 9.9 per cent.

This was one of the salient features of the reform that were fraught with grave danger for the well-being of the fifty-two millions of freed peasants. Another feature was the " redemption."

The landlords had to be remunerated for the slave-labor they lost by the reform of 1861. The sponsors of the reform did not believe the landlords would be able to continue their economic activities without aid and support. This opinion might have been well founded; but of all the varieties of support that were possible, the government chose the one that was most burdensome for the peasants: it made them pay a heavy price for the land remaining in their possession. This price, called redemption, far exceeded the market value of the land. The total redemption-sum, to be paid in forty-nine yearly payments, amounted to 1.5 billions of rubles.

In recent years A. E. Lossitzki, an authority on agrarian problems, made a comparison between the actual value of the land at the time of the reform and the cost of redemption. According to his estimates, the market value of 9,841,000 dessatin of land in the black-earth region was 219 millions of rubles in 1854-58; and 284 millions in 1863-72. For the same area of land the peas-

ants had to pay *342 millions*. In the other regions, for an area valued in 1863-72 at 180 millions, they had to pay as much as 342 millions. The peasants were free, but their prospect was more than gloomy.

A contemporary of the reform of 1861, Nicholas Chernyshevski, a man of deep economic knowledge and thoroughly acquainted with Russian economic conditions, made in 1859 an estimate of what the peasants would have to pay for their land. He came to the conclusion that if their holdings were *increased* by a third, the total payment under normal conditions would amount to 531 millions of rubles. The sum of 1.5 billions rumored at that time he considered an incredible, terrifying phantom created by the enemies of the reform to frighten the public. "We endeavored," he writes, "to keep as close to actual conditions as possible. We based our calculation on scrupulously examined data concerning half a million serfs, while those who frighten us with billions have usually no foundation at all." *

The phantom became a reality. The free "sons of the soil" began their free work under an intolerable pressure. And yet, an unhampered further development might, perhaps, have overcome all these difficulties and rendered rural Russia sound and prosperous. The misfortune of all these millions of freed slaves was that they were tied hand and foot by restrictive measures opposed to agricultural progress.

One of these measures was the quasi-communistic ownership of land.

The individual peasant did not receive his piece of land as his private property. The land belonged to the village community, which apportioned it among its members according to the strength of their families and their fitness for work. Every ten or fifteen years the community would reapportion the land with regard to the

* Sovremennik, 1859, *Is Redemption Difficult?* [Works, Volume 4, p. 347.]

changes in the households of the individual peasants. The peasant could not sell his share of community land, he was not free to refuse to accept the land assigned to him by the village-council, nor was he at liberty to renounce his membership in the village-community. The redemption-payments were not individual payments. The community was made responsible for the debts of the individual peasant and, therefore, looked upon land-holding not as a right, but a duty. Many a peasant would have been glad to forego the blessings of land-holding together with its cumbersome duties. But this, being in opposition to the interests of the community, was not permitted.

The village-community, in apportioning the land, exercised a peculiar kind of justice. It gave the individual peasant not one compact piece of land which he could husband according to his means and abilities, but a number of narrow strips in various parts of the community land. To understand this, let us imagine a community possessing 800 acres of land to be apportioned equally among 100 families. Each family would have a right on eight acres. Let us now imagine that the 800 acres are not all equal in fertility, but consist of hillside, valley, swamps, barren ground, woods, pasture, etc., forming ten portions of a different quality. Now, the justice of the village-community demanded that each of the hundred families should have a share in each of the ten portions or "fields." Accordingly, the land of each peasant would consist of ten 0.8 acre strips located far apart from each other, the strips usually being long and narrow, sometimes not more than a few yards in width.

What were the consequences? The peasant had no inducement to improve his land nor any possibility of doing so. He had no reason to invest money and labor in improvements on land which in a few years would pass from his possession into the hands of his neighbor by order of the community council. He could not think

of more intensive agriculture, having only ridiculously small strips of land at his disposal and being obliged to do the same thing and at the same time as his neighbors. He could not sow clover on his strip while his neighbor on the next strip sowed wheat or barley. He could not seed flax while all the other strips lay fallow and served as pasture to the community cattle. He had to plow and sow and harvest simultaneously with all his neighbors. No free play was left to his initiative and enterprising spirit. Of course, he could rent land from the landlord on which he would have more freedom, but his rented land was of necessity only an addition to his share in the community land, and besides, the rent was heavy and increasing from year to year.

Thus, the agricultural progress was stunted from the very beginning by the laws regulating the possession of land. These laws were intended to preserve equality in village-life and to protect the poor against proletarization. In reality, they bound the peasant to the ground and made him do unprofitable work while as a free laborer he would perhaps have earned far more. They made the individual peasant dependent upon the whim of the community-council, which could deny him the right to leave the village for an industrial center. Hundreds of thousands of peasants, having left behind them all their agricultural past and all hopes for an agricultural future, still had to pay yearly their share of land duties or be denied a permit to leave the village.

We have now surveyed the main evils of rural Russia. These are: (1) an insufficient area of land in possession of the peasants; (2) excessive redemption payments for the land granted; (3) absence of individual property on land, and the economic deficiencies it entails; (4) absence of personal freedom on the part of the peasant. We must add: a heavy land tax, a poll tax and many other taxes besides the redemption payments; lack of schooling and education; lack of knowledge as to the modern

methods of agriculture; lack of cheap credit; lack of laws protecting the poor peasant against the exploitation of the rich. All this, against the background of a reckless and brutal political order, may give us an adequate picture of an overwhelming majority of rural communities in Russia twenty years ago.

The results can be seen from the following figures: Between 1870 and 1900 the peasant-population increased 56.9 per cent. and the number of family-households increased 57.8 per cent., while the total area of land in possession of the peasants (both community and private land) increased only 20.5 per cent., and the total area of land tilled by the peasants (including land rented from the landlords) increased 40.5 per cent. The number of cattle in possession of the peasants increased only 9.5 per cent. In other words, the increase in land-possessions was 2.8 times less than the increase of the rural population; the increase of the cultivated area was 1.5 times less, and the increase in the number of cattle six times less than the increase of the population.*

The growth of the cultivated area must not necessarily keep pace with the growth of the rural population, provided the productivity of land increases. The figures of cattle, however, show that the peasant did not intensify his methods of agriculture. The three-crop system was prevalent in Russia in 1900 just as it was in 1850 and before. The agricultural implements were still primitive. Artificial fertilizing was a thing unknown to the bulk of the peasants. The soil was becoming poorer and poorer owing to inadequate cultivation. Poor soil meant poor crops; poor crops meant hunger and destitution.

The peasants were compelled to rent land. The rent went high. Towards the beginning of the twentieth century the rent in twenty-seven provinces of European Russia amounted to 81.1 per cent. of the net receipts from

* A Finn-Yenotayevski, *Economic Life of Modern Russia,* p. 113.

the land. The rent was often paid not in money, but in kind,—the peasant working on the fields of the landlord. This meant more exploitation and a greater dependence.

It was a pitiful sight—the husbandry of the average peasant. Here he stood, on his small lot, working hard, limiting his wants, and never able to make both ends meet. With a sigh of yearning he would remember the former times of plenty, when the year's crop was stored up in the granary and sufficed till the harvest of the next year, when the linen and the woolens for the clothes of the family were made in the household itself, when money was needed only for the purchase of salt and iron-implements, and when life was secure. He was now producing for exchange,—the poor little peasant. He needed money. He had to pay taxes, he had to make redemption-payments, he had to buy cotton-goods for himself and his family, he had to buy kerosene to light his cabin, he had sometimes to buy a horse or a cow, he had to buy wood for his fire-place. He could not store up his crop. He could not wait. He had to sell his rye and his wheat and his oats as soon as he reaped them. He had to sell at any price. The shrewd middle-man was waiting for him as a beast of prey is lurking for its innocent victim. The shrewd middle-man would even lend him money beforehand, on account of his future crops. When the harvest is reaped, it is taken away at a very low price. Later in winter the peasant is compelled to buy rye and oats for his own family at a price far exceeding that of his sale. Towards spring he has no money, no seeds, no reserves. The only way out is to hire himself as a laborer on the landlord's estate. His piece of land he leaves in the hands of his wife and small children, who are not able to cultivate it in a proper way. The land deteriorates more and more. Poverty increases.

The village-community laws were aimed at preventing

the pauperization of the peasants. In reality, pauperization was only taking on odd forms. The peasant was a full-fledged member of his community; he had a right on land; he was not allowed to sell his lot of land; he seemed to be secure under the protection of wise laws. No law, however, could prevent the poor from becoming poorer or the rich from accumulating land. The peasant had no right to sell his lot, but he had a right to rent it to his more fortunate neighbor and to become a hired laborer in the household of the latter. This was by no means unusual in the villages of Russia.

Data collected in the 'nineties in the province of Samara concerning 28,276 village-households with a population of 164,146 men, women and children, give us the following picture of the distribution of land among the various classes. 37.2 per cent. of the households, embracing the poorest classes of peasants, held 8 per cent. of the land; 38.2 per cent., embracing the middle-classes, held 28.6 per cent. of the land, while 7.6 per cent. of the households, belonging to the most prosperous peasants, held as much as 36.5 per cent. of the land. These 7.6 per cent. of the households, belonging to the richest and most powerful in village-life, held as much land as 75.4 per cent. of the households, belonging to the less successful (Table 7).* Similar figures are found in all the other statistical data dealing with the situation of the peasants. In the Tauric province, in 1891, 40.2 per cent. of the peasants in three counties held 12.1 per cent. of the land, while 3.7 per cent. of the peasants held 16 per cent. of the land: a handful of rich villagers holding more land than almost one half of the entire village-population! (Table 8.)

Nominally, the land belonged to the village community and to every one of its members. In reality, part of it was passing from the hands of the weak into the hands

* V. Ilyin, *Development of Capitalism in Russia.*

of the stronger. The process was slow and exceedingly painful, owing to legal restrictions. The overwhelming majority of the peasants desperately clung to their land and sank ever deeper into poverty, starvation and despair.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE REVOLTING PEASANT

*We want land!*

This was the cry of the peasant all over the boundless fields of the great Empire. This was the common language intelligible to all the villagers in all the provinces, East and West, North and South. This was the *only* slogan the peasant fully comprehended.

You might have come and tried to convince him that a piece of land was not all; that adding three acres to the three he possessed, would solve the problem only for a while; that the resources of land must necessarily become exhausted, however large they may be; that intensive agriculture, scientific methods of cultivation, improvement in the quality of grain produced, coupled with business efficiency and co-operative organization of the peasants, would make it possible to derive a fair income even under the present system of holdings. You would have preached to deaf ears. The peasant could not understand these problems; he was not prepared. They presupposed an intelligence he did not possess. They presupposed a freedom he could not dream of. Besides, all these solutions required money and time, while the peasant was poor and impatient.

The only way out of his misery, a way at once effective and comparatively easy, he saw in increasing his possession of land.

The land was there. It belonged to the landlord. Parts of it had been held by the peasant himself or by his father under the system of serfdom. Parts were rented by the peasant. The landlord did not work. He hired the villagers, their wives and children, he supervised

them through hired managers. Often he did not live on the estate at all, and had no connections with the life of the peasants. Many of the landlords possessed tremendous estates comprising hundreds of thousands of acres. Their land was well cultivated; their cattle well fed; their supplies seemingly unlimited. The peasant was envious. In his unsophisticated mind, this was unjust. He had no communistic ideas as to his own life. On the contrary, in his relations with his fellow villagers he manifested a keen sense of private property. But the land drew him as a magnet. It was something primordial. It was overwhelming. The land was God's and the people's. This was his creed. This was his most cherished thought.

A dark message was creeping through the villages, year after year, finding its way into the very hearts of the peasants. The landlords had deceived them. The landlords had deceived the Tzar. It was the wish of the Tzar to give all the land to the people. But the treacherous nobles concealed the Tzar's manifesto and gave the people only a miserable part of the land. It was the wish of the Tzar that the people should rise and defend their rights.

The expectation of some miracle that would come and return the land to the real owners, never ceased to stir the imagination of the village.

One characteristic detail may be mentioned in this connection. In 1873 and 1874 hosts of idealistic youths undertook a revolutionary crusade into the very heart of rural Russia. They disguised themselves as peasants, artisans or clergymen; they lived with the peasants, worked on their farms, slept in their barns, all the time trying to propagate revolutionary ideas and create nuclei of revolutionary organizations. The attempt failed. The Mujiks (peasants) were not yet fit for secret organizations. They did not understand any revolutionary ideas but the most primitive ones, such as that the land

should belong to the people and that a bad policeman was bad. In 1876, however, two revolutionists, Stephanovich and Deutsch, tried to organize the peasants of Chigirin county, province of Kiev, on another basis, and their attempt was crowned with success. Stephanovich and Deutsch utilized the confidence of the peasants in the Tzar. They appeared before the villagers as secret envoys of the Tzar, sent to stir a revolt against the landlords who usurped the land. They showed the "Golden Manifesto," which, they said, was signed by the Tzar, urging the peasants to organize in secret unions and to prepare for a general overthrow of the landlords' rule. The peasants followed the call faithfully. They united in circles and groups, with oaths of allegiance and other ceremonies. They built a complete hierarchy of representatives. Each member had a spear in his possession ready for the day of vengeance. The first beginnings of the organization dated 1876, and it spread so rapidly that in the spring of 1876 it counted several hundred members. It was later unearthed by the police and severely punished, but it shed a remarkable light on the psychology of rural Russia. The peasants believed in the Tzar, but they also believed that the Tzar wished them to possess the entire land. The Tzar was good, the nobles were bad. The Tzar was merciful, the officers were cruel. Opposing the officers was no crime. Looting from the landlord was no sin.

This psychology accounts for the increasing mutinies of the peasants ever since the early 'seventies. As typical may be mentioned the mutiny of 1874 in Valuisk county, province of Voronesh. There was a misunderstanding between the treasury and a peasant community of this county as to a strip of woods. The peasants claimed that the woods were theirs, while the courts decided in favor of the treasury. The peasants paid no heed to the decisions of the court, continuing to cut trees and graze cattle in the woods. The guards seized the

community cattle and demanded ransom. Two hundred peasants, men and women, gathered and went to the rescue of the cattle. One of the women struck a guard with a club. His comrade fired a revolver and shot the woman. A general skirmish ensued. Five peasants and two guards were killed.

The mutiny, like every mutiny, had the most deplorable consequences for the peasants. A regiment of soldiers was ordered to the spot, each provided with thirty-eight bullets. A special senator, despatched by the Tzar, was in charge of the expedition. Two wagons of rods were brought to the village. Fifty peasants were flogged and five sent to Siberia; the soldiers were quartered in the houses of the peasants, who were obliged to pay sixty copecks per capita daily for the sustenance of the expeditionary force. The village authorities were discharged and replaced by reservist sergeants. Later, the papers published the Tzar's "Imperial gratitude to Senator Klushin for the excellent fulfilment of his instructions."

The same year witnessed another mutiny in the province of Vilna. The peasants claimed a piece of land in possession of the landlord. The official surveyor arrived with the intention of drawing a new land-mark in favor of the landlord. The peasants armed themselves with clubs and scythes and, accompanied by their wives and children, went to the claimed ground to stop the surveyor. The authorities sent a detachment of soldiers who arrested the rebels and put them in prison.

Similar conflicts occurred nearly every year in various parts of the country. The peasants cut down woods, grazed cattle on the fields of the landlords, looted their estates, set their buildings on fire, offered resistance to the local authorities and suffered terrible penalties, without becoming convinced that their doings were wrong.

It must be noted that attacks on the rich peasants who possessed considerable areas of land were rather un-

usual. The rich villager was a member of the community; he was of the peasants' own stock; he spoke their language and lived a life similar to theirs. They may have hated him, but they respected his property. The landlord was another case. He was a stranger. He belonged to another class. He usually spoke French and despised the Mujik and his habits. He had been master before 1861, and the Tzar freed the "people" from under his yoke of serfdom. Was it not right that the "people" should take the land away from him?

It is a characteristic fact that *twenty years* after the abolition of serfdom many peasants started lawsuits against their former masters, claiming unjust apportionment of the land. At the time of the reform itself they seemed to be quite satisfied; under the influence of the peculiar peasants' ideas and the pressure of land-scarcity, they had become restless. A decision of the courts in favor of the landlords never had a great effect with the peasants. The courts belonged to the "gentlemen" and were hostile to the interests of the "people,"—such was the common conception.

It must be borne in mind that the landlords sometimes directly provoked riots and disorder by unjust treatment of the village communities. The land of the village was often surrounded by the land of the landlord. The latter would demand exorbitant prices for granting the village a thoroughfare. He would forbid the community to use the water from his lake. He would impose heavy penalties for a peasant's stray cow found on his fields. That abuses of this kind existed was repeatedly admitted by the officials. In a letter to Mrs. Shklareva, a landlord in the province of Kiev, the Governor of that province wrote in 1902: "The results of an official investigation having been presented by me to the Governor-General, His Excellency has come to the conclusion that the disturbances in the village Golubyatino took place through your own fault, because you attempted to curtail the

legitimate rights of the peasants on the pasture. His Excellency has instructed me to urge you to stop your unlawful attempts on the pasturage of the peasants, and to remind you that in case the disturbances are renewed the consequences may be injurious to your own best interests."

Of course, not many of the greedy landlords were inclined to listen to reason.

In the course of years, the situation of the rural communities became ever worse. Their power of resistance was weakened. Their reserves were exhausted. The soil yielded ever smaller crops. The economic pressure became severer from year to year. The wants of the peasants grew. The payments did not slacken. The debts pulled the villager down. Earnest investigators, such as J. E. Janson in the 'seventies and K. D. Kavelin in the early 'eighties, called attention to the disquieting situation of the villages. But nothing was done. In 1881 the redemption payments were decreased; between 1883 and 1887 the poll tax was abandoned; but at the same time the land-tax and the indirect taxes were increased.

The unstable equilibrium of village-life was perpetually on the point of collapse. The catastrophe came in the form *of famines,* which at regular intervals afflicted large areas of the country. In 1891 occurred the first great famine in Eastern Russia, in 1898-99 the second. Famine meant hunger, disease and starvation in the literal sense of the words. Men, women and children lay under the low roofs of their cabins slowly dying. Their fields remained untilled, their horses or cows were sold for a trifle, their households were falling to ruin owing to their lack of physical strength to do work, and owing also to the lack of seeds (which shows that one year of famine had a fatal influence for many years to come). In the famine of 1899 the number of peasants afflicted with scurvy in the three provinces of Samara, Kazan and

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Starved peasant viewing his barr land

Simbirsk alone amounted to 100,000. There were villages counting two or three hundred sick. In the village Nurlaty, province of Samara, *887* sick with scurvy were registered in 1899. The appearance of the victims was horrifying: swollen limbs, ecchymoses all over the body, rotting gums, appalling odor.

Here is a picture of a village stricken by famine:

"Miserable cabins, cold in winter, intolerably hot in summer, wet and fetid all the time. Numerous cabins are provided with only one window and are sunken into the ground. Many roofs have disappeared together with the rafters: the straw has been used for fodder, the rafters for fire. Some cabins are still ornamented with ugly wads of old straw, thoroughly rotten. It has not been consumed because even the hungry cattle of the peasant seem to refuse it. Many a cabin stands apart, detached from the others,—a house of cards, as it were. Not a tree, not a fence, not a barn, not a court-yard can be seen near these houses. If all these things formerly existed, they have been sold, cut down, burned for wood." *

All this was on the banks of the majestic Volga, in the most fertile region of the country, in a province called the "granary of Russia," in a county where the mold is black and deep and rich, the climate healthy, the air pure and fragrant with the odor of innumerable wild flowers, and the population generally robust, simple and willing to toil.

Very little was needed to arouse the dissatisfaction of the starving millions. They certainly had nothing to lose. Their dissatisfaction meant the greatest conceivable disorder all over the country.

The dissatisfied peasants were the source of the greatest annoyance to the old régime in the course of the Great Revolution.

* A. S. Prugavin, *Hungry Russia,* pp. 59-60.

# CHAPTER V

## "INTELLIGENCIA"

The interests of economic development were the common ground of the Russian revolution. The workmen and peasants were its body; the intellectuals its spirit.

It is a painful joy and a source of pathetic inspiration to follow the history of the intellectual groups in Russia. They stand out like so many pillars of fire in the desert. Their voices sound like beautiful music in a prison-house. Their eyes saw the dawn when dark reigned all around. And their call stirred the depths of young souls when all was apathy and gloom.

It has been the misfortune of the Russian intellectuals to be born in a country united only very late with the modern developments of Europe. When France gave birth to the first revolution Russia was still a barbaric land. When Europe gave birth to the revolutions of 1848 Russia was not yet planning to do away with slavery. When England and America were making progress in establishing democratic institutions Russia was still groaning under the whip of the fiercest absolutism. When compulsory public education had become one of the foundations of modern constitutional countries the bulk of the Russian people could not read or write.

The Russian absolutism, however, was not able to shut all windows facing the Western world. There was a time in the eighteenth century when traveling abroad was looked upon with suspicion by the Russian administration. However, communication between Europe and Russia, between the ideas of the time and the receptive minds of Russian intellectuals could not be prevented. The Russian youths

went to France and Germany to drink from the fountains of knowledge. The Russian thinkers were imbued with the newest ideas, theories and conceptions of the Western world. And since in the actual life of Russia there was no room for applying all these ideas, the Russian intellectual necessarily became a dreamer. He hated the existing order of things in his country, he clearly saw the meanness and the evil effects of slavery and political oppression, but, the conditions of life being against him, he was unable to step to the front and become a leader of men and an active fighter for his ideas. His was only the longing. Years passed. Generations followed generations. The intellectuals themselves changed. But the fact remained that they were cut off from the sources of life by a brutal force and were obliged to spend their years in meditation, in visions, in disappointed feelings. The happiest lot was that of the writers. They, at least, had the means of expressing their ideas and were able to give vent to their emotions and aspirations, though they were compelled to do so in disguised forms, and had to pay heavy penalties for their influence with their readers. Many a great man, the flower of the nation, the pride of future generations, actually paid his toll of imprisonment and exile. Such was the fate of Radishchev, Pushkin, Lermontov, Tchernyshevski, Hertzen, Pisarev, Dostoyevski and scores of other noble souls. Yet, in spite of all, the writers *did* social work. They were the *only* active class among the intellectuals. For nearly a century the writers were the only leaders of young Russia. In literature, all that was idealistic, animated with love of freedom, inspired with devotion to the people and thrilled with the vision of a beautiful future, found its stronghold, its indestructible refuge.

Literature alone, however, could not satisfy. Time and again Russian intellectuals attempted to organize and apply their ideas in practice. Their organizations, however, being largely influenced by foreign examples and

being premature under social and political conditions that existed in Russia, were doomed to failure. Such was the revolt of December, 1825, when army-officers and other intellectuals attempted to apply to Russia the ideas of the French revolution. Such was the enthusiastic movement of the Narodniki (Populists) in the 'seventies, when hundreds of highly cultivated, inspired young men and women attempted to apply Socialism to the Russian rural community. Such was the movement of the terrorists who succeeded in assassinating Tzar Alexander II on March 1, 1881, but soon succumbed to the superior force of the existing order. Such was the fate of many other groups and associations of revolutionary and radical Russia. All these organizations were carried on waves of high and beautiful enthusiasm; they included persons of great moral value and intellectual strength, but they came ahead of time. They were created in Russia, because Western Europe had organizations of the same character and because Russian intellectuals looked westward as to a promised land. But Russia itself was not yet ripe for them.

This peculiar position of the Russian intellectual in the history of his country—his body in the backward East, his mind in the progressive West—gave his character a specific brand. The student of the Russian revolution must by all means take this character into account. We are fully aware of the difficulties of outlining the characteristic features of an entire social group not always homogeneous in its structure and changing from generation to generation with the progress of life. We admit further that personal impressions and individual views of the writer may, in this respect, interfere with objective scientific exactness far more than in any other field of investigation. In view of the fact, however, that the character of the Russian intellectual accounts for many a strange turn in the history of the Russian revolution which cannot be otherwise explained, we shall under-

take a brief survey of this character, not pretending to make a many-sided, exhaustive study.

*The Russian intellectual was primarily a bookman.* Theory meant for him infinitely more than real life. If the facts did not fit into his theoretical structure he would deny their existence or ignore them, or twist and misinterpret them rather than change his theoretical conceptions. There was a time when the Russian revolutionists believed that the way of Russian economic development was not the way of industrial capitalism and the prevalence of cities over rural life. They construed this theory in their firm belief that the village-community with its communal ownership of land was the nucleus of a Socialistic order destined to save Russia from the miseries of capitalism and the hardships of class-struggle. Years passed; Russia became ever more industrialized; railroads, banks, stock-companies, industrial plants covered the plains of sacred Russia. And still this group, known as Narodniki, and all its numerous adherents, ardently clung to the idea that capitalism was only an unhealthy growth on the sound body of agrarian Russia and that the real creator of a new Socialistic order in Russia was the Mujik, the peasant. Ingenious arguments, deeply scientific methods, statistics, economic and philosophic theories were applied to prove this proposition.

*The Russian intellectual substituted discussion for action.* Debating problems, working out programs, discussing theories and trends of opinion was for him not a means to an end, but an end in itself. Moreover, he actually believed that he could not undertake the slightest action, he could not make the first move before he had a theory and a program marked out in the most subtle details. The history of the Russian Social-Democrats and their fierce factional struggles over details of programs that had no applicability whatsoever in actual life, could furnish a sufficient number of illustrations.

*The Russian intellectual was eager for the newest ideas.* Being barred from constructive social work in his own country, being denied the right and the duty to mold the political destinies of his people, he lacked the ability of adapting his plans to conditions, of seeing things in their real shape. He knew no limits to his projects of social reform. Thus it was possible that, in the 'forties, disciples of Fourier in Russia planned a reorganization of their country in accordance with the doctrine of their teacher; that in the 'sixties, in a country just freed from serfdom and hardly beginning to limp after Europe over the path of modern economic development, the ideas of Socialism made great headway; that in the 'seventies, the Narodniki expected Russia to make one great bound from extreme absolutism to an order of perfect social justice. Thus it was possible that in 1905 and 1906 many a grievous miscalculation was made. The Russian intellectual was confined to ideas only. Being denied the test of practice, he chose not the most applicable, but the most advanced ideas.

*The Russian intellectual was inclined to self-analysis and self-accusation.* The first hosts of intellectuals naturally descended from the noble landlords. Their fathers were slave-holders and supporters of the despotic rulers. The sons believed that the sins of their fathers rested on them and that their debt to the people could never be wiped out. A deep gloom, a pitiful melancholy, spread through the ranks of these idealists. They felt themselves guilty without guilt. They were stricken with remorse for crimes they had never committed. They repented for their class, whose bonds they had thrown off. Later, new groups of intellectuals sprang up from among the common people in the cities, even from among the peasants. These were more robust, more self-reliant and less cultivated. Yet even these, sons of the masses as they were, felt the burden of debt on their shoulders and

considered it their primary duty to help the oppressed and the poor.

*The Russian intellectual was of a self-sacrificing spirit.* He felt a deep contempt for those who "settled down," who submitted to the inevitable, acquiesced in the existing order of things and became "respectable," "peaceful." His ideal was a constant burning, an incessant groping for the beautiful, the true, and the just, an eternal protest against petrified forms of life. His road was the stony road of self-denial, of sacrificing the blood of his heart without deeming it heroic, of giving away the bloom of his life without expecting reward. The life of the Russian intellectual is truly written with the red of blood and the gold of dreams on the dark pages of Russian history.

*The Russian intellectual had a deep reverence for the common people.* With what a tremulous heart and with what a glowing hope he waited for the awakening of the mysterious giant—*the people!* From decade to decade he, the intellectual, built plans, constructed theories, fought battles, brought sacrifices and harvested sufferings, —all for the people, all in the expectation that the day would arrive when the masses would take their destiny into their own hands. He had to wait, long and patiently, before the social evolution of the country brought about the awakening of the masses. The intellectual, as it were, stood by the cradle of the Russian mass-movement, followed every stir of its body, greeted every sign of life, prepared for the new-born creature a garment of ideas and a cloak of programs. Long before the labor-movement assumed a mass-character, the Social-Democratic intellectuals worked out a program of economic and political demands and outlined plans for the future revolution. Long before the peasant-masses began to protest against poverty and oppression, the Narodniki organized the Social-Revolutionary Party with its program of thorough-going agrarian reforms. And yet,

when the long-looked-for moment arrived and the Russian masses began to act in their own way, the intellectuals were at a loss. They had no experience. They did not know how to lead large crowds. The mass-movement developed rapidly and violently, and overthrew many a theoretical structure.

*The Russian intellectual was not a man of practical work.* Perhaps he was too pure-minded, too unsophisticated to be able to reckon with the darker sides of everyday life. Perhaps his ideal visions, like blinders, prevented him from seeing life whole. He was not *used* to responsible social and political work, because he had never had a chance of doing it. At any rate, when the time of action arrived, there was sometimes too much talk and too little practical work.

One set of intellectual social workers must be mentioned apart from all the others. These are the representatives and the professionals of the *Zemstvo*. The institution of Zemstvo (county-representation) was established in 1864, in the liberal era of the first years of Alexander II. The Zemstvos were elected mainly by the local landlords and the peasants. They were popular agencies of the central government, created to provide for the economic and cultural needs of the population. The representatives of each county formed a County-Zemstvo, the representatives of all the counties in a province formed the Province-Zemstvos. The Zemstvos, county as well as province Zemstvos, concerned themselves mainly with the needs of the agrarian population. They maintained model farms and employed instructors in modern methods of agriculture, horticulture, cattle-breeding and bee-rearing, to show the peasants the best ways of using their land and its resources. They provided the population with cheap credit, with agricultural implements at reasonable prices, with first-class seeds to plant the fields. They built roads and turnpikes, estab-

lished post-offices and telegraph-stations, maintained book-stores and libraries. A very important branch of the Zemstvo activities was the maintenance of hospitals and physicians giving medical aid to the peasants free of charge. Another branch was public education. Many Zemstvos had their own newspapers and magazines. Many conducted statistical researches as to the economic conditions of the population,—in fact the first reliable statistical data collected in Russia on a scientific basis were furnished by the Zemstvos.

The range of the Zemstvo activities was wide enough, although none of them was of a political character. Law-making and law-criticizing were carefully eliminated from the program of the Zemstvos. Constitutionally, the Zemstvos were strictly confined to local affairs; their task was not to question, but to do practical work within the limits established by law. They were expressly forbidden "to meddle with affairs belonging to the jurisdiction of the Central Government and its Institutions." Not even the laws pertaining to the very fields of their activities were the Zemstvos allowed to criticize. As for purely political questions, it was considered seditious to discuss them.

And still the Zemstvos could by no means remain loyal to the absolutistic order. The Zemstvos were the only representative bodies in Russia, elected by the population. The Zemstvo-suffrage was far from democratic, the electoral law securing to the noble landlords a majority over the peasants, yet the general character of the Zemstvos was liberal and opposed to the central government and its agents. The reason lay in the fact that the most reactionary elements of the gentry were usually the most ignorant also, and took no interest in public affairs. Those of the public-minded, politically enlightened and well-educated gentlemen who participated in the Zemstvo were, as a rule, adherents of a liberal Constitution for the Russian

Empire. They were the only *legal opposition* in Russia.

The Zemstvo work itself stimulated political thinking and political opposition. The decisions of the Zemstvo-bodies were subject to a veto of the governor of the province, which power the latter used in a most arbitrary fashion. The decisions of the Zemstvo had to be carried out by the organs of the local police, who were not very anxious to serve the "meddlers." The Zemstvos were forbidden to form unions or leagues for common purposes, to call conventions or to enter agreements "as to questions pertaining to the general orders of the government or the limits of the jurisdiction of the bodies." The records of the Zemstvo sessions were not allowed to appear in print before they were censored by the local authorities. All this was a great annoyance to the Zemstvo and a hindrance to its activities. Clashes between the Zemstvos and the government became one of the constant features of Russian public life.

The government hated and feared the Zemstvos. It lacked courage to dissolve them even in the darkest days of reaction, but it made every effort to curb them and to impair their work. It forbade the Zemstvos to have control over the curriculum of the schools they financed; it took away from the Zemstvo-jurisdiction the provisioning of the hungry population in time of famine; it limited the budget of the Zemstvos; it vetoed over and over again the most reasonable decisions of the bodies. It went so far as to suspend individual Zemstvos for a certain time. It sent senators to investigate the activities of the most "rebellious" Zemstvos, and the investigations resulted in rebukes for the Zemstvo presidents and the frequent discharge of Zemstvo officials.

The Zemstvo, however, could not be curbed. The Zemstvo-leaders were not revolutionists, indeed; they did not preach violent methods, they did not believe in

"mob rule"; they were peaceful, respectable, wealthy and cultivated. But they were opposed to absolutism. They saw the evils of the old régime *in action,* and they demanded a Constitution.

One precious right was provided for by the Zemstvo-laws, the right of petitions, and the Zemstvo-leaders made constant use of this privilege which was denied to all the other citizens of the country. They bombarded the government with petitions. Sometimes they demanded local reforms, improvements in laws concerning their own jurisdiction. Often they petitioned the government to "crown the building," i.e., to create a Central Zemstvo, a representative body of the entire population. The character of those petitions may be seen from the following address presented to Alexander II by the Zemstvo of the province of Tver, 1878:

"His Majesty the Emperor," the address reads, "in his careful attention to the welfare of the Bulgarian people liberated from the Turkish yoke, recognized the necessity of granting these people true self-government, inviolability of personal rights, independent courts, and freedom of the press. The Zemstvo of the Province of Tver dares to hope that the Russian people, who bore all the hardships of the [Russo-Turkish] war with so much courage, with such a deep affection for their Tzar, 'the Liberator,' will be allowed to enjoy equal privileges, which alone will make it possible for our people to enter the path of gradual, peaceful and lawful development."

Similar addresses were sent by many other Zemstovs in 1878. They were framed in response to a speech of the Tzar urging the loyal nobility and other peaceful citizens to bring the revolutionary elements to reason ("to save our erring youth from the pernicious road along which it is lured by unscrupulous persons").

The petitions and addresses were a thorn in the side

of the administration. The Zemstvos, however, were not willing to forego this effective method of political agitation. Again and again they stirred the leaden quiet of Russia with their respectful petitions and demands. Their actions were not contrary to law, and could hardly be suppressed with the ferocity brought against real revolutionary actions. All the more shocking, therefore, was their effect on the guardians of the "established order."

In 1894, after Nicholas II ascended the throne, a delegation of Zemstvo leaders, men known all over the country, presented themselves to the Tzar asking him to grant a Constitution. Their tone was very moderate, indeed, and their plan of a Constitution all but democratic. The young Tzar advised them and their constituency to "give up absurd illusions," a phrase that soon became notorious in Russia.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Zemstvos, in accord with the growing dissatisfaction of the masses and in response to the revolutionary movements among the workingmen and the peasants, proceeded to a more vigorous opposition. The Zemstvo magazines and papers assumed a sharper tone. The decision of the Zemstvo representatives breathed a deeper criticism. They went so far as to call a *secret* convention of representatives of the various Zemstvos, which formulated a program and outlined uniform tactics for all the Zemstvos. This was the first of a series of *illegal* actions on the part of the very sedate, very respectable and law-abiding gentlemen of the Zemstvo. In 1902 certain of these established in Stuttgart, Germany, a magazine *Oswoboshdenie* (*Emancipation*) under the editorship of Peter Struve. The magazine was forbidden in Russia and had to be smuggled in in the same manner as revolutionary literature. It was widely read in liberal circles and largely contributed to the development of constitutional ideas among the moderate classes of society.

Affiliated with the Zemstvos, partly influenced by them and oftener influencing their politics in the direction of more outspoken opposition, was the so-called " Third Element," the intellectual employees of the Zemstvos, deriving their nickname from the fact that they were the third component of the Zemstvo-bodies, next to the gentry and the peasants. A great number of these people, agriculturists, physicians, veterinarians, nurses, instructors, statisticians, appraisers, engineers, insurance-officers, librarians, were in charge of the various branches of the Zemstvo-work. They were in the closest contact with the local population, knew very well its needs, understood its psychology and often enjoyed its unlimited confidence. They were radical and revolutionary in the main, more radical and more revolutionary than the Zemstvo-leaders, in the same measure as they were less wealthy and less conspicuous. It is to their direct efforts that many a revolutionary step of the Zemstvos must be ascribed, and it is due to their constant agitation among the peasants that the spirit of rebellion spread like a contagious disease. The " Third Element " was a great source of revolutionary energy that could not be easily exhausted. Formally, it was not affiliated with any of the revolutionary parties; legally, it could not be so mercilessly prosecuted as were the professional revolutionists. In reality it was a constant aid and comfort to the enemy of the absolutistic order.

Social-Democratic intellectuals; Social-Revolutionary intellectuals; " Oswoboshdenie " intellectuals; " Third Element " intellectuals,—all these groups differed from each other, criticized each other's programs, bitterly opposed each other. All of them, however, were united in their condemnation of the old régime and in their readiness to struggle for a free democratic Russia.

The intellectual groups were one of the most turbulent sources of the Great Revolution.

## CHAPTER VI

### ABSOLUTISM IN THEORY

CAPITAL, industry, labor, land, trade problems, financial problems, labor-problems, agrarian problems, industrial organizations, labor-organizations, strikes, class-struggles, peasants' revolts, intellectuals' protestations, general unrest, growth of parties, factions, radical theories, incendiary literature, underground plotting, uniting, undermining, threatening. . . . A chaos of facts, forces, deeds; a chorus of voices, impatient, shrill, commanding. A great world rising from the dust of ancient passivity. All this on one side. On the other, the Russian "Samoderjavie" (absolutistic order).

As opposed to the multiplicity of modern life, the theory of government held by the rulers was very simple. One God in heaven, one Tzar on earth. All power is vested in the Supreme Power, the Absolute Monarch; all power emanates from him and finds in him its justification. The absolute monarch gives laws to his subjects, personally or through servants following his orders; he sets rules, appoints judges, punishes the disobedient; he has at his command an army of officers, ministers, administrators, ranging from the highest advisers of His Majesty to the youngest policeman in the remotest village. All are responsible to him; all the machinery of the government forms one great net whose strings are gathered together in the hands of the monarch. One pull and the net will relax or tighten; one order and millions of servants all over the country will hasten to carry out the will of the Supreme Power. He, the Great One, knows all, sees all, cares for all, does everything for the benefit of all, and

nobody can better understand the interests and the welfare of all.

This is not an exaggeration. To the modern American reader it may sound like a voice from past centuries, from the catacombs of mediæval Byzantium. For the theorists of absolute Russia there was nothing bizarre in these assertions.

We will quote Katkov, the famous publicist who in his paper *Moskovskya Vedomosti* (the Moscow *Courier,* under Katkov's editorship from 1863 to 1887) gave a very clear expression of the views of the old régime and its aspirations. "Katkov," says another supporter of the absolutistic order, Gringmut, "was the first to come and declare that Russia was perfectly sound even under the existing order; that she was in no need of slavophilic or liberal reconstructions to be able to follow the road of Orthodoxy, Absolutism and Nationalism; that she needed only faith in herself, faith in her strength, faith in God and absolute obedience to the Tzar to be able to face both external and internal foes." * Katkov was one of the small number of able intellectuals defending the cause of the Russian government, and his words may be taken for a true reflection of its theoretical conception.

"Government in Russia," he says, "means a thing totally different from what is understood by this term in other countries whence we borrowed some of our institutions without being able to adapt them to our conceptions. In other countries, in England for instance, the term government is applied to the administration, i.e., to one of the two national parties which is in power while the other is in the opposition. We have no party government, and to look upon our affairs in the light of such views is simply absurd. In Russia, the government, in the highest sense of this word, is *the Supreme Power*

* "In Memoriam of M. N. Katkov," a collection of articles, 1897. Quoted by V. V. Rosanov, *Literary Sketches,* p. 127.

*in action;* it, therefore, cannot be understood as related to parties. In Russia, the government, inasmuch as it is the action of the Supreme Principle, towers above all, and no organization of a compulsory character can be independent of it. In our country there is no room for the fictitious assumption resulting from the history of other countries, namely that *'le roi règne, mais ne gouverne pas.'* The Russian absolute monarch both reigns and governs, and his power is totally free in its fundamentals, being embarrassed or limited by nothing. This is no doctrine or opinion of a circle of people; it is the fundamental law on which the Russian Empire is based; it is the most concrete fact." *

The Russian Tzar, in the opinion of the theorists of absolutism, is not only a supreme, unlimited and unhampered ruler; he is more. "All power has its derivation from God," says Katkov, "the Russian Tzar, however, was granted a special significance distinguishing him from the rest of the world's rulers. He is not only the Tzar of his land and the leader of his people, he is designated by God to be the guardian and custodian of the Orthodox Church. The Russian Tzar is more than an heir to his ancestors, he is a successor to the Cæsars of the Eastern Empire, the builders of the Church and its conclaves, the founders of the very Creed of the Faith of Christ. With the fall of Byzantium, Moscow arose and the grandeur of Russia began. Herein lies the mystery of the deep distinction between Russia and all the nations of the world." †

The Tzar and his absolute power are nothing foreign to the Russian people, the eulogists of absolutism declared. One cannot separate the Russian nationality from the Russian supreme power, Katkov writes. "Whoever proclaims his true and sincere allegiance and devotion to the Russian monarch, must necessarily become

* *Moskovskya Vedomosti,* November 8, 1882.
† *Ibid.,* September 7, 1882.

amalgamated with the Russian people. The meaning and the character of the Russian national feeling is convincingly emphasized by the entire history of Russia. This is not a feeling of a hireling who performs his duties as long as it pays him to do so; this is a national power, a family feeling, created by our history, bred by our Church, a power which our nation cannot abandon without ceasing to be herself." *

The Tzar is the only ruler. He is wise and good and holy. But how about the people? Must they have only duties or are they also entitled to rights? The theory of absolutism does not hesitate in answering this question. Katkov's conception of the Russian Constitution is perhaps the most original of its kind. "Our ethereal parties," he writes, "our liberals and conservatives, conservatives and liberals, give themselves much trouble about a 'lawful order,' as they express it in their jargon. They want to reward us, Russian subjects, with political rights. Isn't this a futile effort? We, Russian subjects, are already in possession of what they want to grant us; we even have something more. They want to grant us political rights while we have *political duties,* which is more. In our duties, our rights are implicitly included, our duties are inseparably accompanied by rights. What we are obliged to do, we have a right to do. We do not need a Constitution; our Constitution is our oath of allegiance which obliges us, Russian subjects, to care for the welfare of the Monarch and the nation. It is our duty to have this welfare at heart and to avert, as far as possible, any harm that could threaten the Monarch and the nation. Those who do not do so are, according to our 'lawful order,' criminals and traitors. Now, if every one of us has a duty to serve the throne and the fatherland, every one of us, of course, has also a right to do this duty." †

This wonderful theory of "the right to do one's duty"

* *Moskovskya Vedomosti,* April 22, 1867. † *Ibid.,* May 11, 1882.

was the fundamental answer to all those who had heard about a magna charta libertatum and about government by the people for the people.

Parliaments, party rule, elections, in short all political activities on the side of the people, were pictured by the theorists of absolutism as corrupt, vicious and selfish. "To leave to a collective mob the work of legislation, justice and administration would mean to leave it to the arbitrary will of an elemental power," Katkov writes. "The mob is not an individual, it has no conscience. The mob follows an external impulse. In the absence of a recognized leader responsible for its direction and its actions the mob necessarily follows an irresponsible driver. God save us in all our affairs from mob rule and irresponsible drivers." *

It was the firm belief of the staunch absolutists that the misfortune of Russia is not the excess of power, but the lack of concentrated power in the hands of the administration. The government was too lenient, they said; it allowed too many and too important branches of administrative work to slip out of its hands. The judiciary, public education, the press are all public functions of a high significance, they alleged, and no public corporations, independent of the central government, should be intrusted with these functions. Katkov and his disciples, therefore, bitterly attacked trial by jury, autonomous universities, independent press-publications. Much as all these institutions were controlled, supervised and bridled by the administration, the mere existence of such institutions, the mere fact that they acted in accordance with *written law,* however oppressive the law might be, and not in accordance with the orders of superior persons, branded them in the eyes of the absolutists as pernicious and fraught with danger.

There was nobody so eloquent, so deep in his scorn, so bitter in his denunciations, so equipped with profound

* *Moskovskya Vedomosti,* September 4, 1882.

knowledge, so gifted and elegant in his writings in defense of absolutism, as K. P. Pobedonostzev, the professor, the instructor of Tzar Nicholas II, the long years' Procurator of the Holy Synod and close friend of the royal family. His works may be looked upon as the deepest and most talented exposition of the absolutist ideas. Moreover, it seems that Pobedonostzev was *sincere* in his conceptions and that his hatred for everything new was part of his mental make-up.

There is a thick veil of gloom spread over the works of this highly interesting, many-sided thinker, the gloom of dark, ancient cathedrals, the solemn melancholy of judgment-halls, the sadness of old patriarchs observing new life as it breaks established rules and customs. This gloom is characteristic of all the defenders of the old order.

What is a parliament? Pobedonostzev asks, and he answers: a parliament is "the great falsehood of our time." "One of the falsest political principles is the principle of government by the people, the idea, which unfortunately became established after the French revolution, that all power has its origin in the people and is based on the will of the people." * "Parliament is an institution serving to satisfy the personal ambitions, personal vanity and personal interests of the representatives." † "Theoretically, the elected representative is supposed to be the favorite man of the majority, practically, however, he is elected by the minority, sometimes by a very scant minority, only because the minority represents an organized power, while the majority is like sand, loose and unorganized and therefore unable to resist a circle or a party." ‡ "The greatest evil of a constitutional order is the formation of a ministry on a parliamentary or party basis." § "Instead of the unlimited power of the monarch we have the unlimited

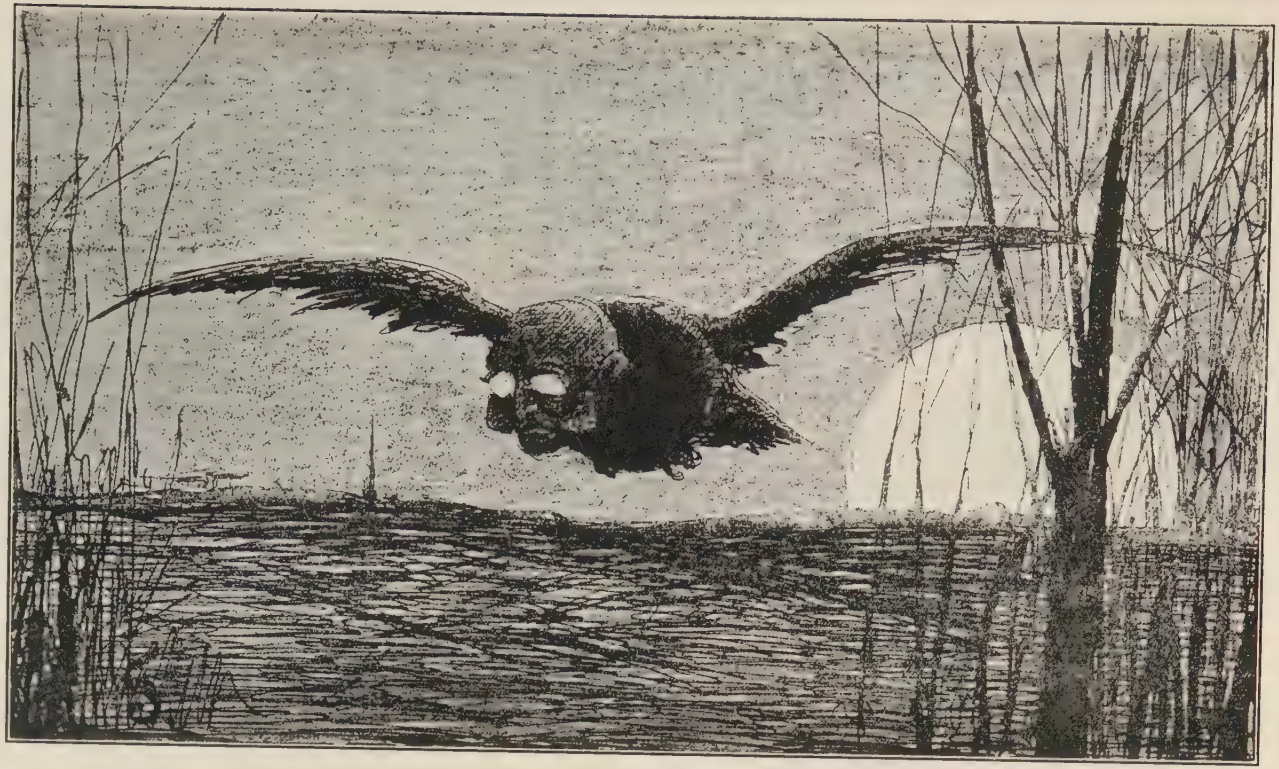
* The *Moscow Collection*, p. 31. † *Ibid.*, p. 34.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 38. § *Ibid.*, p. 47.

power of a parliament; but while the monarch can be thought of as personifying *the unity of an intelligent will,* the parliament lacks this quality, being dependent on the will of a majority, that is to say, on the exigencies of the vote." *

What is law? Pobedonostzev asks. Law is an obstacle in the path of an intelligent executive,—he answers. "The multiplicity and complexity" of laws in parliamentary states "becomes a hindrance not only for the citizens, but, what is more important, also for the administrators called to put the law in practice." The administrators, under those conditions, become embarrassed "in their striving towards truth and public weal." "If a person whose duty it is *to act,* meets restricting instructions on every step in the law itself and in its artificial formulations, if he is always exposed to the danger of overstepping a certain line of demarcation, then the administrator loses himself in doubts and is weakened by the very thing that was intended to furnish him with power." †

What are liberty, fraternity, equality? They are a bait invented to lure the masses, says Pobedonostzev, they are a dangerous poison permeating the very blood of modern Europe, causing all the disturbances and all the political unrest. Liberty is a folly if not accompanied by the sense of duties. But the masses do not understand this truth. "The masses are dissatisfied, indignant, restless, protesting, they overthrow institutions and governments which have not kept their word, which have not realized the hopes aroused by these fantastic ideas; they create new institutions and again destroy them, they turn to new rulers who have lured them with the same deceptive words, and again they overthrow them, seeing that they are unable to keep their promise. A miserable and terrifying chaos in public institutions: waves of passion surge and sweep everywhere; time and again the

* The *Moscow Collection,* p. 48. † *Ibid.,* pp. 90-91.



Spirit of Pobedonostzev

people are pacified by the magic sound of the words freedom, equality, publicity, popular sovereignty, and he who knows how to play skilfully and at the right time with these words becomes the ruler of the people." *

Trial by jury is an absurd and dangerous institution, declares Pobedonostzev. Trial by jury has not proved efficient and just even in England, where it is deeply rooted in the history of democratic institutions and where it gradually developed. In Russia, trial by jury is a foreign plant utterly unfitted to the character of the nation and her institutions. In Russia "there is no firm leading judicial authority while a crowd of attorneys has rapidly developed"; in Russia "there is a motley crew of jurors drawn either in a haphazard way or artificially selected from the masses who have neither an understanding of the duties of a judge, nor the ability to survey masses of facts requiring analysis and logical discrimination. There is, lastly, a mixed crowd of observers who come into the courts as they come to a show, to amuse themselves in the midst of a dull and idle life. Is there any wonder that, in such an environment, the jurors blindly follow one or the other attorney who has succeeded in making the strongest impression?" †

The press is one great falsehood,—charges Pobedonostzev. "Since the fall of mankind, falsehood has established itself in the world, in human words, actions, relations and institutions. Never before, however, did the father of falsehood invent such a tangle of lies and falsehood as we see in our turbulent times when so many *false* words are being spoken about *truth*. In a measure as the forms of public life become more complicated, new false relations develop and institutions saturated with falsehood spring into existence." One of these institutions is the public press. "One tells us to believe that the voice of the magazines and newspapers, or the so-called *press*, is the expression of public opinion. Alas,

* The *Moscow Collection*, p. 106. † *Ibid.*, p. 56.

this is a great lie, and the press is one of the false institutions of our time." "The worst scoundrel, the noisiest chatter-box of the type of the unrecognized genius, the most unscrupulous man of affairs, greedy for profits, in possession of his own or borrowed money, can found a newspaper, a big newspaper, can whistle to a score of scribblers and feuilleton-makers who will come and stand by him, ready to discuss everything in the world; he can employ a squadron of reporters to serve up ignorant gossip and rumor; his staff is ready, and tomorrow *he assumes the position of authority,* judging everything and everybody, influencing ministers and rulers, art and literature, the stock-exchange and industry." * The journalist is the most irresponsible, the most cruel and indiscriminating judge in the world. "Yet this judicial power he assumed wilfully, without receiving his title from any higher authority, without giving proof of his abilities, without a test of personal trustworthiness and impartiality, without being limited in his sentences by any forms of procedure and without a possibility for the convict to appeal to a higher court." †

Public instruction is also one of the falsehoods of our times, according to Pobedonostzev. The public school must teach reading and writing and arithmetic and the fear of God and devotion to the Monarch. All other subjects are not only superfluous but dangerous. The people do not need the "encyclopedia of science taught in schools as the course of knowledge of the native country"; the people do not need "physics, chemistry, agriculture, medicine." ‡ There is no need of combatting superstitions, either. Superstition is "the natural, elementary power of inertia, it is of the highest importance. As ballast keeps the ship in equilibrium, so superstitions keep a nation in a stable position through the course of her history. To destroy them would mean to destroy the

* The *Moscow Collection,* pp. 60-61. † *Ibid.,* p. 63.
‡ *Ibid.,* p. 71.

social *stability* which is always necessary as a starting-point for further movement." * With profound grief Pobedonostzev speaks of the modern teachers who have come to spread knowledge and to fight popular superstitions. They are not teachers, he says, they are servants of the evil spirit. "The evil spirit wanders among the simple and humble of our people, near and far; the evil spirit lures the sheep from the fold, appearing before them as a teacher, and leads them astray and drives them into the desert." †

Pobedonostzev, with his broad knowledge and keen observer's eye, could not fail to see the signs of modern social evolution in Russia. These signs greatly disturbed him. He hated the new forms of life, he saw a great calamity impending. "Our life," he writes, "has become hideous, insane and false beyond belief, because all order and consistency have vanished from our development, because all discipline of thought, feeling and morals has been relaxed among us. In public and family life all *simple, organic relations* have been shattered and destroyed, and their place has been taken by intruding *institutions and abstract principles,* mostly false or falsely applied to life and practice." ‡

Pobedonostzev was consistent. He lived in a world very different from that of reality. He saw a vision of a "simple, organic" relationship between people. He was afraid of the new "insane" evolution. He hated laws and "institutions" because he saw in them a limitation of the free will of the Supreme Power. He felt a profound, almost mystic reverence for authority, for governmental power. God, the Monarch, and the people were one great unit in his conception. God, the source of all wisdom and all life; the Tzar, God's representative on earth; the people, to be guided by the supreme power of the Monarch, to be treated like children who can have no will and no understanding of their

* *Ibid.*, p. 72. † *Ibid.*, p. 76. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

own. " The task of authority is great and holy. Authority worthy of its name inspires people and adds wings to their actions. To see authority of this kind, to feel its inspiring influence is a great joy for every one who loves the truth, who seeks for light and virtue." *

Pobedonostzev was consistent. Life was against him, and he challenged life. Social evolution was undermining his cherished institutions, and he condemned social evolution. He was like a statue of black marble dug out from under mediæval débris. Yet there was no flaw in his theoretical construction.

Of far less consequence were his colleagues of the Russian administration who were doing their utmost to " shatter simple, organic relations," to make life " hideous and insane," to introduce modern capitalism and modern social classes in Russian life, and who, in spite of all, still clung to the old forms of government and still believed that they were reconcilable with the new social conditions. One of the most conspicuous of these administrators was Sergius Witte, for a long time Minister of Finance and in 1905 first Prime Minister under the new semi-constitutional system. Witte was anxious to hasten the development of capitalism, to construct railroads, to establish banks, to increase the Russian import and export, in short, to make the social structure of Russia similar to that of Western Europe. Yet, he believed, or tried to make believe, that the growth of social forces and the absolutistic form of government were not contradictory to each other.

" The development of social forces, healthy and many-sided, not only does not contradict the principles of an absolute monarchy," he writes as late as 1899, " but, on the contrary, it gives the monarchy vitality and strength.

" While the government concurs in the development of social activities, while it listens, as it were, to the throbbing of the social pulses, nevertheless, it does not

* *Ibid.*, p. 258.

pass into the possession of society, but remains an intelligent power and a consistent authority of its own, always aware of its ends, always in command of the means to achieve its ends, and always knowing the direction toward which it is tending.

" A government of this kind does not run the risk that its measures, inconsistent with the past, incompatible with the nation's character, would not fit the social level, that society would develop without it and outside of it, that the government would cease to be the highest leader of the sum total of the social movements.

" Under a government of this kind, the work of social forces can be of a greater fruitfulness for the country and its population, than under a system where professional politicians conduct public agitation, where individuals are greedy for power and profitable positions, where political struggle marks the activities both of parliament and local bodies. Ninety-nine per cent. of the population have nothing to do with those struggles: they have neither time, nor interest for them, nor are they even allowed to share in these contests." *

We have thus surveyed the views of the various theorists, defending the absolute order. We have seen that those views ranged from the glorification of a patriarchal order, from the condemnation of each and all modern social activities, including a public press and public education, to a half-hearted admission of the fruitfulness of many-sided activities on the part of the people. Common to all these theories was the mistrust of the people, the idea that the " mob " had no sense of justice, no understanding of its own interests, no discrimination between good and evil. Not even a man like Witte, considered the most " progressive " and " European " among Russian administrators, would admit that the people were able to take care of themselves without the guidance of an absolute ruler. Common to all these

* S. J. Witte, *Absolutism and Zemstvo,* pp. 209-10.

theories was, further, the belief that a man in a uniform was the wisest and most efficient in public affairs, that elective bodies of a constitutional government pursue only their own selfish motives while an autocratic government is above parties, above passions, above political intrigues. The underlying psychological foundation of all those conceptions was the desire for simplicity, quiet, smoothness. Nothing was more abhorrent to an administrator than commotion, unrest, acclamations, demands, the rise and fall of leaders and institutions. One must not think that all of the old administrators or their literary supporters were actuated by purely selfish reasons. Many a man among the ranks of the old régime was really shocked by the sight of constitutional Europe. Many had sincere reverence for autocratic power. The shadows of old serfdom were still lingering in most of the hearts of the Russian administrators, who were either sons of the land-owning nobility or closely related with it. "We are thine," was the phrase common with the peasants in addressing their masters prior to 1861. "We are thine," was the expression of deep resignation on the part of the governed. "We are thine,"—this spirit was the most ideal in the opinion of the adherents of old Russia. The country, in their opinion, was only a great domain of the monarch. The higher bureaucrats and the class into which they were born were the advisers of the monarch and the executors of his will. The "population" was only a horde of inferior characters allowed to go about their business and even amass riches, but never permitted to criticize or to oppose orders. All had to be quiet in sacred Russia. All had to be guided from one center. Everything had to run in strictly prescribed order.

# CHAPTER VII

## ABSOLUTISM IN PRACTICE

In theory absolutism was bad, in practice worse. The Russian practice reflected the "genuine Russian" theory in the same way that a crooked mirror reflects an ugly face.

There was something uncanny in the attitude of a Russian administrator towards the people. In private life, in relations with his equals he might be very friendly, very congenial, very human. In his office, in relation to his inferiors or to those depending on him, he would lose all human features, he would become a cruel, soulless fiend, haughty, contemptuous and hateful.

Perhaps this was due to the fact that the Russian bureaucratic machinery was copied from that of the Prussian, the Prussian pattern being followed not only in the names of the offices and the uniforms of the officials, but also in strict automatic discipline, while hosts of Russian administrators were actually Germans, descending from the German nobility of the Baltic provinces and imbued with the spirit of the German Junkers. Names like Rennenkampf, Klingenberg, Stackelberg, Schwanebach, Schlippe, Rieman, Mien, Von Plehve, Von Wahl, names notorious for their slave-like devotion to autocracy and their inhuman attitude toward the Russian people, were by no means an exception among the ranks of the Russian administrators. It is worth while quoting a little document very well known in Russia. It is an order issued by the commander of the Semyonovski Guards Regiment, Colonel Mien, on December 15, 1905, authorizing an officer of the regiment, Colonel Rieman, to suppress the

revolutionary movement along the Moscow-Kazan railroad line. The document reads in part as follows:

"Moscow. An expedition is herewith ordered, to start on December 16, along the Kazan railroad visiting the stations Perovo, Lubertzy and Kolomna.

The commander of the expedition is to be *Colonel Rieman I.*

The expedition is to consist of the following units of the Semyonovski Life-Guards' Regiment:

9th Company, Captain Shvetzov, Sub-Lieutenants Albertov II and Makarov.

10th Company, Captain Von Sievers I, Lieutenants Polivanov and Von-Vogt.

11th Company, Second-Captain Nazimov II, Sub-Lieutenants Scharnhorst and Romanovski.

12th Company, Captain Zykov and Lieutenant Shramtchenko.

14th Company, Captain Von Schimroth I, Sub-Lieutenants Von Krusenstern and Von Minnig.

15th Company, Captain Meyer, Sub-Lieutenants Falysev and Nikanorov.

2 guns.

2 machine-guns.

The aim of the expedition: to find the leaders, to annihilate the armed revolutionary militia.

General directions: *to make no prisoners and to act mercilessly.* Every house from which a shot has been fired to be destroyed by fire or by artillery.

Signed:

Commander of the Regiment, Aide-de-Camp,
COLONEL MIEN.
Adjutant of the Regiment,
LIEUTENANT VON BRUMMER." *

It seems incredible! A *German* commander of a regi-

* Cited by V. Vladimirov, *Punitive Expeditions,* pp. 7-9.

ment of imperial life-guards ordering a *German* colonel "to make no prisoners and to act mercilessly" in combatting the *Russian* people, and giving for his aid *German* officers named Von-Sievers, Von-Vogt, Scharnhorst, Von-Schimroth, Von-Krusenstern, Von-Minnig and Meyer! Yet, such was the structure of the Russian bureaucracy. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the "punitive expedition" under Colonel Rieman surpassed in cruelty and mean bloodshed all the horrors of all the other expeditions. And perhaps this considerable admixture of German elements in the body of the Russian administration accounts for the deep contempt of the Russian "Tchinovnick" (officer) towards the Russian people.

"The Governmental Germans" is a name applied to the Russian bureaucracy by a political genius, Alexander Hertzen, nearly half a century before the revolution. "As Saxony has it own little Switzerland," he writes, "so we have our own, far from little, Germany. Its center is in Petersburg, but the points of its periphery you find wherever there is the stiff collar of a uniform, the office and the secretary of an administrator. The real Germans are only the kernel or the leaven; the majority consist of all sorts of Slavonic orthodox Russians, with our traditional fat noses and Mongolican jaws, learned people, ignoramuses, commanders of squadrons, journalists, and chiefs of departments. Of all the governmental Germans, the Russian Germans are, naturally, the worst. The German German in the governmental machinery is sometimes naïve, sometimes stupid, he has a condescending attitude towards those whom he intends to humanize. The Russian German is narrow of mind and looks upon the people with the disgust of a rich relative. Both the Russian and the German Germans feel themselves infinitely superior to the people, both have a deep contempt towards everything Russian, both are convinced that the only way to handle us is with the club. The German Ger-

man does not always show this, though he hits unremittingly; the Russian German both hits and boasts." *

The main reason, however, for the disdainful attitude of the Russian administrator towards the Russian people was the social structure of the bureaucracy. We have already mentioned that it was mainly composed of members of the nobility, for centuries the land-owning and governing class. In the early years of the twentieth century, the average Russian administrator could say to himself that the fathers of the restless " mob " had been slaves to his father fifty years ago and that the fathers of many intellectuals had been humble artisans or traders trembling in the presence of the powerful landlord. This social demarcation bred a spirit of seclusion, of arrogance and brutality. It is no exaggeration to say that the Russian administrator looked upon the country as his private estate. The people were there to be governed and to pay; the army, to offer positions for his sons and the sons of his kin; the economic life, to offer new opportunities for governmental experiments, for positions, and, mainly, for revenue. Of course, everybody had to obey and to be " cheerfully devoted " to his rulers.

In the methods of the Russian administration, there was something of the spirit of a foreign military power governing an invaded country. An invader is not supposed to know the occupied country. His is not the task of adapting himself to local conditions. The welfare of the population concerns him very little. His orders he receives from a center far remote. His chief endeavor is to please those who have sent him to the enemy country and to have a good record. " If my superior orders, I shall be even a midwife,"—in this proverbial sentence there is the entire philosophy of the Russian " Tchinovnick." He knows nothing about the needs of living human beings. He knows everything about the whims of

* A. J. Hertzen, " Governmental Germans," *Kolokol* (*The Bell*) No. 53, October, 1859.

his superiors. He cares little about the results of his activities. He cares highly about the formal side of his duties. "There is a spirit, dead and deadening all it comes in contact with," writes a *conservative* Russian writer, Menshikov. "This spirit takes hold of you when you are not the master of your work, but a hireling, when you are under no proper control, when you have no responsibility, when you are never in a hurry and never interested in the work you do,—in a word, when you are a Tchinovnick, one of our Russian Tchinovnicks. The paper-spirit that makes our bureaucrats walk in their sleep is like nitrogen; it makes breathing impossible." *

It was a very elaborate, highly centralized machinery, the Russian bureaucracy, but unlike other machinery, it was not a means to an end, but the most important end to those engaged in its work. Prince Sergius Urusov, a high Russian administrator, was appointed in 1903 Governor of Bessarabia. In his *Memoirs of a Governor* he writes: "I knew at that time as much about Bessarabia as I knew about New Zealand, if not less. Kishenev (the capital of Bessarabia) was known to me only by name, and principally because for a long time the papers published particulars of the famous Jewish pogrom, April 7-9, 1903. I was much more concerned with the external side of my new position, how to arrive, how to receive the visitors coming to my reception, how to become acquainted with my set of officials, whom to visit. These and similar questions of etiquette and representation worried me much more than the difficulties of governing a province hitherto unfamiliar to me." †

The same Prince Urusov tells a fact about his predecessor, Governor Raaben. Raaben had ordered the troops to go to the scene of the pogrom, but had failed to give orders as to the actual measures to be taken in

* M. O. Menshikov, *Letters to My Neighbors,* February, 1905, p. 57.
† Prince S. D. Urusov, *Memoirs of a Governor,* pp. 1-2.

handling the riots, leaving the responsibility entirely to the commander of the division. This was contrary to law and one of the causes of Raaben's removal. His negligence was severely criticized in the press and in society. After having received formal notice of his removal, he called in his assistant and asked in great irritation: "For God's sake, can't you at last show me these rules about troops called to assist the civil authorities that are dinned into my ears!" Raaben was supposed to know the rules both as a Governor and as former Colonel and Commander of an army-division. The same Raaben remarked to Prince Urusov: "I am very sorry to be leaving the province now, just as I am beginning to be acquainted with it." This after having been Governor of Bessarabia for four years.*

It was part of the system that the administrator should be detached from the population. It was the same system that managed to station soldiers *not* in their native places, in order that there should be no connection between the army and the local population. It was the same system that frequently removed civil officials from one place to another. The patterns of papers and the rules and regulations being similar for all provinces of Russia, there was no difficulty connected with such removals. The advantage was that the official was prevented from getting into the bad habit of thinking himself a part of the local community.

The machinery of the administration was, theoretically, highly centralized. In practice, the area of the country being very large and local control of the communities over officials being absent, centralization turned into its very opposite. Every governor was a sovereign by himself. Every official acted according to his own whims. "I am your God and your Tzar," was the answer of the administrator to complaining people. The law was enforced only when it was profitable for the administrator. This

* *Ibid.*, p. 33.

system meant practical anarchy, disorder, chaos in public affairs. It was the worst kind of decentralization; it was decay.

In one point, however, the Russian official was very alert, very efficient, very prompt,—in quelling the rebellious spirit. Practically, the entire governmental apparatus was adjusted to this function. Towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, all governmental activities became of minor importance as compared with the task of searching for revolutionists and unearthing secret meetings or secret organizations. Every measure of the government had this end in view, every official made it his principal thought. You might have been ignorant, clumsy, negligent, even criminal in your administrative activities; nobody would take notice of it if you only were an ardent prosecutor of the "uplifters." After a while it became *profitable* to be a prosecutor of revolutionary ideas. It gave the official a standard, a name, recognition. And Russian administrators surpassed each other in discovering and suppressing disorders.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian citizen was enveloped in a thick net of rules and regulations that made life intolerable. The press could not print a word that had not passed the red pencil of the government's censor. The censor not only rejected all news concerning political movements in Russia or all articles criticizing the measures of the administration; he rejected everything that he, personally, did not like. He suppressed stories, fiction, which *could* be interpreted as praising liberty or scorning oppression. He killed popular articles on history, literature, geography or even natural history, where he thought he scented a "free spirit." He struck out whole passages, lines or single words in articles he permitted to be printed, or he added passages of his own. He often rejected book-reviews not in agreement with his taste, or theater-reviews unfavorable to an

actress he happened to know. He suppressed news that might be unpleasant to local celebrities, rich people known in the community. He made the life of writers and editors and publishers intolerable. The press groaned under the vicious and petty whims of irresponsible, uncultivated, official guardians. In 1899 the radical monthly *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* one of the leading magazines of the country, was suspended for a term of three months for having cited, word by word, an official document, an order of the Governor-General of Finland. Moreover, the issue, where the document was cited, had passed the hand of the censor *before* it was published, and the censor had taken no offence!

"*Intensified vigilance*" reigned in the greater part of the country. This was a state similar to martial law. Under the "intensified vigilance" rule, search of private residences, the arrest and search of individuals could be undertaken by the police without warrant. The regular police was reinforced by two sorts of special political police: the gendarmerie and the so-called "Vigilance Departments," secret offices having at their command hosts of detectives and agents provocateurs.

The *passport* was the unavoidable companion of the citizen. You could not move a step without a passport. You had to register every time you changed your place. If you took a trip to the country, you had to register in the inn where you stopped. If you traveled, you had to register in every hotel. The registration stamps on your passports showed all your movements, and if asked by the police, you had to give an account of all you had done in the various places. If your passport had lapsed and you were careless enough not to renew it, the police could send you under guard to your native town where your passport was issued. This travel under guard, from town to town, from police station to police station, from prison to prison, sometimes lasting weeks and months, became a kind of natural duty of the Russian citizen

whose sole crime was that his passport was not in full order. " The passport is the soul of a man," the proverb ran. As you cannot live without a soul, you cannot live without a passport.

*" Political Reliability "* was another feature of autocratic Russia. Records were kept of each citizen, made up of information delivered by the secret service. The records related to the political views of the persons. A man or a woman reported to be of liberal or radical aspirations, was noted " unreliable." Any citizen wishing to perform public or semi-public work or to enjoy the services of a teaching institution, had to provide himself with a " Certificate of Political Reliability " from the governor of his province. Certificates of this kind were requested from students entering college, from college graduates passing their state-board examination, from physicians, lawyers, dentists, teachers opening an office or a school or taking a position, from publishers and editors of papers, from book-sellers and librarians, from agriculturists, veterinarians, nurses and other professional folk employed by the Zemstvos or by the city-administrations, from persons engaged in the public service or in the civil service, etc. A person refused a " Certificate " could not be active in any of these and many other occupations. Nothing was more annoying to intellectual Russia than this arbitrary system of " Certificates." A person refused a " Certificate " could not even complain, the " Vigilance Departments " being *secret* offices with secret information and their decisions being final.

The only habeas corpus of the Russian citizen was the institution of bribery. One must not imagine that bribery was merely obnoxious. It gave relief. It slackened the grip of petty and stupid regulations. It was perhaps the most human institution among the barbed-wire entanglements of the Russian order. The helpless, cornered citizen was willing and eager to pay and be left alone. It goes without saying that the Russian administrators pur-

posely increased the number of restricting rules in order to be able to make exemptions and get paid.

As matters stood, there was actually not one Russian official inaccessible to bribery. Everything depended upon the size of the sum or the nature of the bribe, for there were many sorts. The writer of these lines knew a police officer whose salary was 300 rubles ($150) a year. Yet this officer lived in a beautiful house with luxurious furniture, kept a private teacher for his children, rode through the streets of the town in an elegant carriage drawn by two expensive horses, and had a saddle-horse besides; in short, he led the life of a very wealthy man. This was no secret to his superiors. On the contrary, when the superior, the county-officer, visited the town, our officer would give him a splendid reception with exquisite dishes and champagne. In fact, the salary of many officers was so small that they simply could not live on it if they had no illicit income. It was a tacit assumption that the main source of income was not the salary but the "side-issues," and one spoke of them frankly. The paper-mill and the saw-mill the writer of these lines was connected with had among its regular items of expense monthly payments to the district and county police. So did all other industrial concerns of the county and all business-men. Prince Urusov tried to make an estimate of the sums received yearly by the Bessarabian police in *regular payments*. The total, he writes, amounted to over a million rubles. In this sum were *not* included all sorts of bribes from real criminals and other irregular sources of official income. And yet Bessarabia is not an industrial province and its population is not very large. "In defense of the Bessarabian police I must add," says Prince Urusov, "that in the estimation of a keen expert who himself served in the office of the Petersburg chief of police, the police of the capital receive yearly about six millions of rubles in regular payments, i.e., in payments which are made not because of a viola-

tion of the law, but merely because landlords, storekeepers, factory-owners, restaurateurs, etc., exist. The tolls for actual violations of the law were not taken into account because no estimate can be reached." *

A special source of revenue were the Jews and the other oppressed nationalities whose rights were still more limited and their human dignity still more violated, and who could not draw breath without paying the masters of their destinies. It would make a very pathetic book were one to tell the story of the Jews, the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Ukrainians, the Finns, the Letts, etc., under the old régime. The theory of absolutism demanded that those nationalities should be Russianized, in accordance with the psychological inclination of the bureaucracy towards centralization and uniformity. Oppressive measures, however, barred many of the non-Russian nationalities from Russian schools and kept them from mixing with the Russians in various walks of life. All this filled the nationals with an inflexible hatred of old Russia.

An administration of this kind was neither willing nor able to understand social movements or political aspirations. To the Russian "Tchinovnick," everything was "disorder." A petition of peasants, a strike of workingmen, a meeting of intellectuals, a lecture, a discussion,—all was "disorder," created by malicious agitators to violate law and peace. College students dissatisfied with their curriculum held a meeting to discuss it,—this was "disorder." Shop-girls decided to ask a raise in wages and elected two representatives to deal with the employer,—this was "disorder." Teachers organized evening classes for adults and talked to their pupils about the political order in various countries,—this, of course, was "disorder." Every activity, every social work was "disorder." The rule was that anything that was not

* Prince S. D. Urusov, *Memoirs of a Governor*, p. 53.

expressly permitted, was forbidden, and everything that was forbidden had to be suppressed by armed force.

The administration *saw* the growing dissatisfaction, it *felt* the surging unrest. Yet it imagined that this was only the work of evil-minded individuals who ought to be captured and put in prison. The number of "evil-minded" grew in alarming proportions, from thousands to hundreds of thousands, from little groups into tremendous organizations, and still the bureaucracy blamed the "evil-minded" agitators, the "uplifters"; still it concentrated all its attention and all its wits on putting these dangerous individuals into prison.

To the historian it seems like a manifestation of total blindness that the powerful Minister Witte should in 1899 have recommended the curbing of the Zemstvo and the strengthening of the administrative power. "No further expansion of the activities of the Zemstvo should be tolerated," he urges; "a clear line of demarcation must here be drawn which under no circumstances should it be permitted to overstep. Simultaneously, every effort should be made to organize the administration of the government on an adequate and efficient basis, remembering that he who is the master of the land ought to be also the master of the administration." *

Nowhere perhaps is the blindness of a Russian administrator exhibited in a more startling fashion than in the following document written by Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski. Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski, it must be remembered, was a very human, honest, well-meaning administrator. In his capacity as the chief of the Russian gendarmerie he, in 1901, investigated the causes of unrest among the workingmen of Petersburg. In his report he states that the causes of the success of the revolutionary propaganda among the industrial workingmen lay partly in the very conditions of their life. "Chief among those conditions," he says, "is the fact that the

* S. J. Witte, *Bureaucracy and Zemstvo,* p. 212.

workingmen are not secured in case of old age or inability to work on account of sickness." He further states that a new type of workingman has become common during the last few years. "Our good-natured Russian fellow has turned into a peculiar type of half-ignorant intellectual, who deems it his duty to defy religion and family-bonds, to scorn the law, to disobey officials and mock at the authorities." Workingmen of this type, he admits, have the greatest influence over their comrades. The workingmen of Petersburg, the report relates further, have a remarkable thirst for knowledge, they crowd schools for adults, they devour every bit of printed matter available in the popular libraries. This eagerness for reading and learning, he says, accounts for the spread of secret revolutionary literature.

Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski's report shows that he had observed the facts correctly: a new type of workingmen, a new spirit, a dissatisfaction due to bad conditions. What means could be recommended to remedy the evil?

Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski recommended that the schools for adults should be put under control and that a special patriotic paper should be published for the workingmen containing labor news of an innocent "neutral" character.*

This bit of administrative ingenuity was only equaled by the measure forbidding the newspapers in times of famine to mention the words "famine," "scurvy" or "starvation."

* N. Simbiroski, *The Truth About Gapon,* pp. 26-28.

# PART II

# THE GREAT DRAMA: 1905-06

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE PROLOGUE

How does a revolution begin?

The author of this book has been closely related with Russian political life ever since 1900; he remembers the time when nothing stirred in the great Empire; he witnessed the growth of political movements, the deepening of dissatisfaction among the masses, the stiffening of resistance; he was in the midst of the great wave that swept the country in 1905 and 1906; yet, the "how" of the starting-points of the revolution remains a mystery to him. In what subtle ways did the spirit of rebellion creep at the same moment into the minds of so many individuals who formed that abstract aggregation called a "social group" only in the eyes of the sociologist while in their own eyes each and every one was a microcosm and the center of the universe? What was the *power* that transformed the mere discontent of millions into revolutionary determination, and revolutionary determination into revolutionary action? We have surveyed the social forces of Russia before the revolution; we have seen the *causes* that tended towards social and political upheavals. Yet the *moving forces* remain hidden, and neither the historian nor the contemporary observer can say with assurance that under the same political and social conditions the country might not have remained quiet for another decade or more.

This simultaneous spreading of revolutionary ideas; this miraculous change in the minds and in the attitude of individuals, this growing willingness of many to sacrifice their lives for what had suddenly become their highest ideal, this response of large masses to the call of a few

leading organizations, is to the observer the most beautiful yet also the most inexplicable public phenomenon ever beheld. We shall have glimpses of this "how" in the third and fourth parts of this work where individual revolutionists will pass before our eyes. In this part we will only try to give an account of the most significant events of the stormy years 1905 and 1906, the years of the Great Revolution.

Prior to 1905, beginning with 1898-99, there were numerous and picturesque movements that created a great sensation, shaking the Russian citizen from his apathetic drowsiness, and causing the government to tighten its grip over the country. All these movements, however, seemed to be rather of a sporadic character, and only the ardent believers in the revolution, who unconsciously projected their burning desires into reality, considered them harbingers of a very near storm.

The winter of 1898-99 was all astir with the general strike of college students. The rumor of a dark prison tragedy culminating in suicide on the part of a political prisoner, had spread in intellectual circles. The fact was not more outrageous than numerous other facts passed over in silence. Yet this tragedy set the universities aflame. Meetings were held in the classrooms, revolutionary resolutions were passed, the students of Petersburg refused to attend the lectures. In a short time the movement spread over many other universities. The students demanded political reforms, including academic freedom and autonomy. The authorities shut the universities for an indefinite time and sent the students home to their parents. Several thousand young men returned to the country relating the story of the outrage. In the winter of 1900-01 the movement started again. The students called meetings, protested vigorously against academic and political measures of the government, protesting simultaneously against unpopular teachers. The writer of these lines was then a student

in the University of Kiev. As he recollects it now, there was no more reason for excitement that year than at any other time. Yet the students were restless. Numerous secret organizations—province-brotherhoods—conducted the movement. In a measure, the student-movement was a political manifestation along the lines of the least resistance, it being the practice of the administration to expel only the revolutionary students from the university and to put the leaders for a few months into prison, while participation in revolutionary labor-movement rendered one liable to years of imprisonment and exile in Siberia. In the winter of 1900-01, however, the government decided to punish the students severely. For an innocent political meeting in the University of Kiev, where no acts of violence were committed, we, over 400 young men, were tried by a special commission and over 200 were sentenced to serve one year in the army. We were not expelled from the University, we were only sent for a year to the barracks "for correction." Among the new recruits there were many who had been exempted from military service, many who were weak, consumptive, afflicted with heart-disease, one of my friends even a cripple on crutches. Yet all were sent to the army. The measure was by no means clever. It irritated the most loyal citizens and sent tears into many a kind-hearted woman's eye. The 200 odd boys, dressed half in students' uniforms and half in military attire, despatched over the country in all directions to the regiments to which they had been assigned, were an unusual sight indeed. We were received at many stations with cheers and compassion. The army itself was amazed to see this peculiar set of recruits. The more sensible officers and soldiers were dissatisfied to see the army, the pride of the nation, turned into a place of correction. Yet, in the main, it was perhaps an advantage for the army to come in contact with so many revolutionary youths. It stirred the imagination and aroused questions.

Directly connected with the student-movement was a street demonstration in Petersburg in the spring of 1901 and the assassination of the Minister of Public Instruction, Bogolepov, by a student.

After 1900, the movement in the universities became a permanent feature of Russian political life, time and again co-operating with the labor-movement and resulting in street demonstrations.

The labor-movement was stronger in the Western portions of the Empire, among the Jews, the Poles, the Letts, but Social-Democratic and Social-Revolutionary organizations existed practically in all industrial centers. The revolutionary organizations were coming in ever closer contact with the working-population, spreading revolutionary literature, organizing industrial strikes as a means of bettering the conditions of labor, calling secret meetings and, on rare occasions, organizing street demonstrations. It must be remembered that under the reign of bureaucracy, all peaceful social activities necessarily became of revolutionary significance. A strike for higher wages is in itself a peaceful undertaking; the strikers, however, being persecuted as criminals and rioters and the leaders being punished with imprisonment, every strike invariably turned into a protest against the bureaucratic order. A lecture on the merits of a constitutional order or a meeting discussing the necessity of labor legislation contains hardly any elements of rebellion; but a meeting or a lecture of this kind held in a secret place, in the fields or in the woods, with revolutionary watchmen standing guard, with audience and lecturer assembling by stealth under all possible precautions, with police and gendarmerie searching the fields or the woods to break up the meeting with bayonets and whips, becomes a daring revolutionary act. Still more daring was a street demonstration under the red flag. Cossacks and mounted police were ready to tread the demonstrators under the feet of their horses; saber and gun and whip worked mercilessly,

and hardly any demonstration passed without leaving a number of wounded.

These measures on the side of the government, undertaken with blind obstinacy and carried out with ever-growing ferocity, were by no means able to quell the movement. They only bred the spirit of hatred and gave birth to a renewal of terroristic acts, especially by members of the Social-Revolutionary Party. In the spring of 1902, the Minister of the Interior, Sypyagin, was assassinated by a member of this party, a Kiev student, who had served his term of correction in the army. The student was sentenced to death and executed. The same spring, Governor Von Wahl ordered the participants in a May demonstration in Vilna to be flogged. One of the workingmen afterwards made an attempt on his life and was hanged.

In the spring of 1902, the peasants were heard from. In the provinces of Poltava and Charkov sixty-nine estates of large landowners were looted, set on fire and partly destroyed by revolting peasants.

The movement was not organized at all. It started with elemental force, spread like wild-fire from village to village and in a few days turned thousands of humble villagers into furious rebels. The procedure was nearly everywhere alike. The peasants came to the landlords, complained that times were hard, and asked to be given grain and fodder free of charge. The landlords not being inclined to part with their property, the peasants, sometimes several hundred in number, practically entire communities, assembled, opened the granaries and took all they could get hold of. From the houses of the landlords pieces of furniture, sewing-machines, women's dresses and kitchen utensils were taken by the peasants. Everything else they destroyed and burned. The hordes of rebels acted with full assurance: "So it is written in the booklets," many of them said (evidently they meant the revolutionary leaflets). Many peasants spoke of a "new

law" permitting them to divide the land among the "people." "Such is the will of His Majesty the Tzar," was an opinion frequently uttered. When detachments of cavalry and infantry appeared on the scene of the rebellion, the peasants did not believe the soldiers would fire. "We are no Chinese," they said, "we are Orthodox Russian people." Yet the soldiers did fire, two peasants were killed, many were wounded, and numbers of rebels were punished with rods in the streets of the villages; 1,098 Mujiks were arrested, and an indemnity of 800,000 rubles was imposed on the rebellious communities.

It is worth while quoting one of the witnesses at the trial of the rebels. The witness, a village-reeve, who had not participated in the rebellion, stated: "The share of land held by a peasant in my village is not more than two dessatin (5.4 acres). Last year the crops were bad and towards spring there was a shortage of bread. We had very little food for our families and no fodder for the cattle. . . . The rent is going up from year to year. Five years ago we used to pay for a dessatin 6-8 rubles; to-day we pay 12-19 rubles for a dessatin of the same quality. As to our own land, it is mostly sandy and infertile."

It was sheer necessity, the elementary hunger of the unreasoning savage, that threw the peasants upon the rich estates. Here they saw foodstuffs in abundance. Here they could appease their hunger. The allusion to the "will of the Tzar" and the "new law" was only a justification of this primitive impulse. Back in the minds of the rebels there may have lingered the old peasant belief: "The earth is God's and the people's."

It must be noted that the extremist revolutionary party working among the peasants, the party of the Socialist-Revolutionists, did *not* urge the peasants to attack estates, rob and burn. This they did of their own accord.

The government saw that something must be done. It

organized a special " commission to investigate the needs of the agricultural industry " with branches in every county. Contrary to its custom, it allowed representatives of the Zemstvo and other persons known in the communities, to join the commissions along with the governmental officials. These commissions gave the liberals and radicals of the Zemstvo an opportunity to express their views in public. The majority of the commissions, though strictly controlled by local authorities, recommended progressive measures: adherence to the law on the part of the administration, decrease in taxes, expansion of the peasants' land-holdings through state-aid, etc. Some commissions were almost revolutionary in their assertions and sharp in their accusations against the government.

The proceedings of the commissions (in session 1902-03) occupied for a time the center of public attention. The commissions were " legal " bodies. Their members were no " uplifters." Yet they revealed with convincing clearness the crisis in Russian life. They strengthened the constitutional aspirations of the intellectuals and gave a new stimulus to the Zemstvo opposition. It was due to this commission that a *secret convention* of Zemstvo representatives was held in 1902, its aim being to outline a uniform policy for all the Zemstvo members participating in the commissions.

Great as was the political influence of the proceedings of the commission-branches over the country, its rôle in relieving the agrarian crisis was next to naught. The government did not like the measures urged by the commission. On March 12, 1903, it abandoned the mutual responsibility of the village-communities for the redemption-payments. This was a shadow of a reform, and gave little comfort to the peasants. The following May, as if to balance the concession, the government established in the villages a mounted constabulary with unlimited power " to safeguard decency, peace and order." The

constabulary was more than a shadow; it greatly discomfited the peasants.

Rural Russia was hardly satisfied. As early as April, 1901, a press correspondent writes from the province of Voronesh: "The air is charged with evil bodings; every night the horizon is illuminated with distant fires; a bloody fog is creeping over the earth,—it is as if a storm were impending,—it is so hard to breathe and to live. The Mujik is sullenly silent, and when he begins to talk, he makes you shiver."

In 1903-04 his mood was still less cheerful. The year 1902 witnessed peasant revolts in the provinces of Cherson, Yekaterinoslav, Bessarabia, Tchernigov, Saratov, Perm, Volyn. The reverberation of these revolts was felt far and near.

Simultaneously, the labor movement was growing in scope. Revolutionary ideas were finding their way into practically every factory. Demonstrations of workingmen became more frequent. In the summer of 1903 a wave of *political* strikes, accompanied by large mass-meetings, rolled suddenly over Southwestern Russia, calling tens of thousands of workingmen from their factories and shops. The strike, joined in by many railroad employees and street-car conductors, was unexpected and unprepared. It was one of those spontaneous outbursts that nobody could foresee and nobody was able to direct. It died out as suddenly as it sprang up. It only indicated that a process of great momentum was going on in the depths of the masses.

The revolutionary underground press was now working strenuously, feverishly, criticizing, commenting, spreading revolutionary news. Life was becoming colorful, exciting, absorbing, yet the "legal" public press, half-strangled by the censor, could not mention any of the most thrilling political events, nor could it comment on the most vital timely topics. It, therefore, was a convenience for the public to learn the truth from under-

ground publications. Revolutionary literature began to find its way among all classes of Russian intellectuals as well as into the heart of the masses. The police and the gendarmerie had their hands full, searching private residences, arresting presses, confiscating loads of literature. In spite of all this, the press grew incessantly. The most widely known publications of this time were the *Emancipation,* organ of the Zemstvo group of a similar name; the *Spark,* organ of the Social-Democrats, and the *Revolutionary Russia,* organ of the Social-Revolutionists. Proclamations were issued on every occasion, numbering hundreds of thousands of copies yearly.

The government had one ingenious method of averting public attention from the most vital problems: a pogrom. In April, 1903, it staged the pogrom in Kishenev, Bessarabia, where scores of Jews were killed and mutilated by the mob and entire streets were looted. The pogrom was unprecedented in cruelty and bloodshed. It aroused a storm of indignation abroad, but in Russia itself hardly any comment was permitted. The progressive Russian, however, easily recognized the mysterious hand behind the mob. We all knew that police officers were everywhere connected with the underworld, with criminals, ex-convicts and other representatives of the slums. We knew that one hint from the police was sufficient to let loose all these "dark forces." We had heard about proclamations spread in the saloons and cheap restaurants of Kishenev summoning people "to take the law in their own hands." We were fully aware, on the other hand, that where the government really *wished* to stop riots or mob robberies, it succeeded in a few moments. In Kishenev, the pogrom lasted for three days, and nothing was done by the civil or military authorities to stop murder. Putting these facts together, it was easy to draw conclusions.

Autocratic Russia hardly gained in prestige by the Kishenev slaughter.

## CHAPTER IX

### UNDER THE SHADOW OF WAR

EARLY in 1904 the Russo-Japanese war began.

The war was unpopular. Nobody believed Russia had vital interests to defend in the Far East. The mystery covering all the actions of the Russian administrators in Manchuria, and the fact that the press was never permitted to criticize those actions, only added to the mistrust. In the first days of the war, small patriotic street-demonstrations were arranged, which aroused no enthusiasm. Soon the consequences of the war began to be felt: business underwent a crisis, credit fell off, taxes became heavier. The toll of human lives was keenly felt in agriculture.

Later the defeats began, shameful, humiliating defeats. The attack on the Russian fleet in Port Arthur, the battle of Yalu, the Liaoyang battle, the Mukden battle, the fall of Port Arthur, the destruction of the battle-fleet near Tsushima, all this made a tremendous impression on the Russian people. Here were no theories; here were facts. Russia had a population of 130 millions; her budget amounted to 2 billions of rubles; she had at her disposal 1,600 battalions and 5,300 field-pieces. Japan had a population of 45 millions and a budget of less than 60 millions of rubles, and her army was smaller. At the beginning of the war official Russia was certain of victory. "We shall cover them with our caps!" proudly declared the patriotic press. Even the liberal opposition believed in an ultimate victory of Russian arms. After all, Japan was only a little mops trying to bite the leg of a huge St. Bernard dog, wrote the *Courier of Europe* in the spring of 1904. Many

other liberal publications were of the same opinion. The revolutionists alone predicted defeat, but their predictions were based merely on general assumptions of Russian administrative corruption.

The events surpassed all expectations. The Russian army, the iron hand of the great Empire, the pride of autocratic Russia, turned out to be as brittle as clay. The commanders had no knowledge of the country, no maps, no plans laid out, no courage or foresight. The soldiers were ill fed, ill treated and ill kept in far, inhospitable Manchuria. Criminal negligence was equaled only by criminal ignorance. Stories, one wilder than the other, were told in Russia, characterizing the helplessness, inefficiency and cruelty of the "men higher up," and every story proved to be true. On September 19, 1904, General Kuropatkin, the commander-in-chief, issued an order to the army. "Seven months ago," the order says, "the enemy treacherously attacked us without a formal war declaration. Many heroic deeds have since been performed by the Russian armies on land and sea, which the Fatherland may be justly proud of. Still the enemy is not yet prostrated in the dust before our feet. On the contrary, he cherishes thoughts of a complete victory over us. Excess in numbers and favorable location have hitherto given him a free hand in choosing the time and place for attacks. Now, however, the long-looked-for moment has arrived when we can advance and launch an attack on our foe. The time has arrived when we will compel the Japanese to obey our will. The forces of our Manchurian armies are strong enough for a bold offensive." * A few days later General Kuropatkin took the offensive and suffered a dreadful defeat, losing 50,000 men and 43 cannon.

All this was a revelation for Russia. Not even the revolutionists had believed the decay of the old régime

* M. Povlovich, "Our Foreign Relations and the Russo-Japanese War." In the series *Social Movements in Russia,* Vol. II, p. 26.

would become so apparent. Had the war been conducted on Russian territory, the defeats might have aroused hatred towards the enemy and, perhaps, despair. As it was, thinking Russia experienced only a malicious gladness at the sight of the blunders of the hated administration. The war was a practical method of political instruction, a very expensive object lesson as to the inherent meanness of irresponsible bureaucracy.

Thinking Russia realized now that a modern army was part and parcel of the people, that where social forces were hampered in their development, armed forces could hardly be effective. The formidable Russian Tchinovnik, the rigid disciplinarian, the strict pedant, the horror of his subordinates, suddenly lost his prestige. He could not amount to much if he was unable to preserve the honor of the army. A paper like *Novoye Vremya,* usually a mouthpiece of the administration, wrote in December, 1904: " In heaven's name, do not imagine that we mean to suggest that there is any lack of administrators, any lack of rigor. We have enough administrators, and too much rigor; all this, however, is no security, it is only a fiction of security. In Europe things are different. There, the bureaucracy itself is vigilantly guarded by the thousand eyes of the public Argus. . . . Where the nation controls the affairs of the state, serious abuses are unthinkable, inactivity or idle, useless activity impossible. In Russia, on the contrary, the pernicious custom prevails of " washing our linen at home." This sluttishness is the very heart of our tragedy. Every one of our departments is a " home " by itself, air-tight and admitting nobody. For generations and generations the dirty linen has accumulated in those " homes " stuffing every corner and thwarting the finest machinery. Every department is a kind of Port Arthur, inaccessible to the public. What has the public known about our battle-fleet? Nothing. Every effort to substitute a certain amount of knowledge for ignorance has suffered a lamentable fate."

The *Novoye Vremya,* in spite of its servility, was very sensitive to the prevailing trends of mind in the public.

Yet, in the first months of the war, the public was silent. It seemed to be in a pensive mood. It had to digest the events. It observed, it listened, it devoured the newspapers, it discussed the facts in private circles, but it did not stir. Rural Russia became also an ardent reader of the press. Village and town alike were absorbed in the great drama.

The grip of the administration was tighter than ever. Von Plehve was now Minister of the Interior and dictator. He put his heavy hand on the Zemstvos, filled the prisons with new hosts of political suspects, curbed the press with unparalleled fierceness, spread a net of agents provocateurs among the revolutionists and liberal society, increased the burdens of restrictions for the Finns, the Poles, the Jews. Russia was going through the severest reaction she had experienced since the reign of Alexander III. Plehve's idea was to nip every movement in its bud, to keep dead silence everywhere. And he succeeded. The Russia of early 1904 seemed to be much more restrained than the Russia of two years before.

In the midst of this silence a tremendous event occurred. On July 15, 1904, Sazonov, the Socialist-Revolutionist, threw a bomb under the wheels of Von Plehve's carriage. The dictator was dead.

The impression created by this single act was enormous. Attempts on the lives of high officials were at that time by no means unusual. Early in June, 1904, Bobrikov, the Governor-General of Finland, was assassinated by a revolutionist. Many other terroristic acts were committed. None, however, could equal in impressiveness the death of the sternest and most significant of Russian administrators. Plehve, the genius of political espionage, the shrewdest suppressor of revolutionary movements, dead from the hand of a revolutionary ven-

detta! It was more of a blow to autocracy than the loss of an army in the Manchurian fields.

For the first time in many decades the government lost its poise. It decided to make concessions. Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski was appointed Plehve's successor. The new Minister declared that it was his intention to "trust" social organizations and establish "cordial relations" between the government and the public.

Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski was a liberal administrator. He sincerely hoped to improve relations between Russia and her ruling forces. He was well meaning, no doubt, but he had no intention of granting serious reforms. He wished to change *the tone* of official Russia while leaving *the institutions* intact. And he underestimated the public frame of mind.

Svyatopolk-Mirski's declaration opened the sluices of public opinion. The press was the first to raise the question of a "lawful order" and real reforms. The censorship existed as ever, but it was understood that moderate views expressed in a moderate language would be tolerated. The press made extensive use of this promise. The Zemstvos and other liberal organizations became more determined and more active. Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski was not less severe than Plehve in handling revolutionary elements. It was, however, inconsistent with his policy to muzzle liberal organizations. The second half of 1904, known as "Spring," was therefore marked by a strong liberal movement.

A national convention of representatives of all the Zemstvos was called for November 6, 1904. The convention was forbidden by the government, but the organizers ignored the order. The convention assembled openly in Petersburg, numbering among its members the best known social workers, professors, writers, lawyers, men of science. A set of resolutions was passed demanding *a constitutional order in Russia,* and urging the government immediately to call representatives of the people.

The necessity of personal freedom, free speech, free press, etc., was especially accentuated.

The November convention was one of the most remarkable turning-points in the history of new Russia. It expressed, openly and fearlessly, in the face of the old administration and all its tremendous forces, the common desire of thinking Russia. It acted in violation of the government's measures as if challenging the government to try and interfere with the representatives of public opinion.

This the government did not dare to do. Not one of the convention members was arrested. Not one raid on the convention hall was undertaken. The example of the Zemstvos only encouraged other liberal organizations to follow.

The era of "banquets" began. Physicians, lawyers, engineers, writers, organized public gatherings under the disguise of private banquets; speeches were given, resolutions passed, questions of civil order and constitutional law discussed. The press commented on the resolutions. Several new papers sprang up, using a language hitherto unknown in "legal" publications. Numbers of books on constitutional problems, formerly forbidden by the censor, were now published and read with real avidity. Sonorous voices, fresh, self-reliant, full of life, filled the "Spring" air.

The more radical parties were under ban, as before. Strikes were being suppressed, meetings of workingmen dispersed by the police, village agitators arrested. Plehve's espionage machinery was in full swing. Yet, nothing could prevent revolutionary intellectuals from participating in the "legal" liberal banquets. True, the organizers of such banquets were sometimes afraid of the police and therefore unwilling to give their gatherings an outspoken revolutionary tinge. The revolutionists, however, insisted on being admitted to the places of free speech. And thus the "legal" and the "illegal"

branches of new Russia met for the first time, trying to influence each other and to find a common language. Sometimes the "masses" themselves, simple workingmen, members of revolutionary organizations, made their appearance at the banquets, giving them a picturesque air. The subjects under discussion were the methods of political campaigning. The radicals insisted on revolutionary methods, on the necessity of mass-movements, barricades, violent insurrections, being certain that old Russia would not yield voluntarily. The moderate elements believed old Russia was on a road of reforms and had only to be urged by organized public *opinion*. The Zemstvo liberals could not imagine the administration opposing the clearly expressed wish of the people.

The resolutions of the November convention were discussed at the sessions of the local Zemstvos and municipal councils in November and December, 1904. Numerous petitions were adopted asking the Tzar to call representatives of the people. Some of the petitions were extremely moderate. The Province Zemstvo of Kaluga, for instance, expressed its hope that "the best men, clothed with Your Majesty's confidence and the confidence of the people, will gather around your great throne to defend it against the enemies of a firm order." Such utterances were looked upon by the revolutionary factions as aimed against the revolution, and were criticized in venomous terms. Many of the petitions, however, were expressive enough. Thus the City Council of Moscow, on November 30, 1904, decided "to call the attention of the government to the urgent necessity of the following measures: protection against unlawful administrative prosecution; abolition of extraordinary 'vigilance' measures; freedom of creed and conscience, freedom of speech and press, freedom of organization and assembly; guarantees of above measures by a freely elected representation of the people; normal co-operation of the

government with the social institutions exercising control over its actions."

In the meantime, while the radicals and liberals were discussing ways and means of action, the government was getting tired of all the noise. It wanted to stop the talk once for all. On December 12th, it issued a ukase, promising "responsibility of the authorities for unlawful actions," a "greater participation of the Zemstvos and municipal councils in the care for local welfare," "unity in the courts," state-insurance of industrial workers, "a decrease in the scope and burden of extraordinary measures," "removal of superfluous restrictions of the press" so as to put it "within limits strictly defined by law" and removal of certain religious restrictions. The ukase seemingly aimed at quieting public unrest, but it contained no promise of reforms. It did not remove the extraordinary "vigilance" measures, it did not grant trial by jury for political cases, it did not promise freedom of speech or assemblage, and it contained no hint as to popular representation. The ukase was the utmost one could expect from the government, and that was nothing.

On the same day, December 12th, the government issued a statement declaring that "all disturbances of peace and order and all gatherings of an anti-governmental character must and will be stopped by all legal means in command of the authorities." The Zemstvos and municipal institutions were advised to keep within lawful limits.

This was the end of the "Spring." The romance of "cordial relations" withered away. The semi-official *Moscow Courier* hailed the end of the "notorious Spring." It gave expression to the hope that after spring a *very hot* summer and a *tempestuous* autumn would follow, and then winter would come, "our genuine healthful Russian winter, with its smooth comfortable sledgeroad over which lightly and peacefully will glide our home-

made historic vehicle, which is perhaps somewhat clumsy, but so well suited to our national tastes and habits." "It is high time," the paper adds, "that we have a rest after a forty years' fatiguing drive over bad political roads."

# CHAPTER X

## THE FIRST ACT: JANUARY 9

On March 11, 1904, the "Gathering of Industrial Workingmen of the City of Petersburg" opened. It was a *"legal"* organization, similar to the Zubatov organization in Moscow. Its aim was to unite the workingmen on the basis of mutual aid and to form a counterbalance against revolutionary ideas. The program of the "Gathering" was: (1) Sober and reasonable pastimes, aimed at physical, intellectual and moral improvement; (2) Strengthening of Russian national ideas among its members; (3) Development of "sensible views as to the rights and duties of the workmen"; (4) Improvement of labor conditions and mutual aid.

The Gathering was opened by special permission of the administration. The leaders of the organization were in constant touch with the highest police officials of Petersburg. The rank and file of the Gathering, however, knew nothing of these secret connections.

The Gathering flourished. Workingmen, eager for any kind of organization, flocked into it and made the opening of new branches necessary. The branch-halls became attractive social centers, with lectures, discussions, tea-parties; on Sundays the halls were crowded till late in the night. The workingmen were cautioned not to discuss any political questions; they were free, however, to speak of their economic conditions, of wages, labor-hours, trade diseases and means of improving their lives.

The leader of the Gathering and its connecting link with the administration was the priest, George Gapon. It seems that Gapon had no political plans when he founded the organization. He was opposed to the revo-

lutionary parties and the revolutionary labor-movement. He hoped to improve labor conditions through peaceful and loyal activities of the workingmen. Perhaps he saw nothing obnoxious, from his point of view, in communicating with the secret police. At any rate, he was ardently devoted to the organization and made every effort to raise the cultural and intellectual level of its members.

The revolutionary agitators and the radical intellectuals shunned the Gathering as a tool in the hands of the administration. Radical lecturers refused to appear before its audiences. Gapon himself selected a few score of the more advanced members with whom, privately and almost secretly, he discussed political and economic problems, read books on trade unionism, the history of the labor-movement in Russia, the merits of a constitutional government and the electoral systems in various countries. The "Spring" era seems to have had a great influence both on Gapon and on the Gathering. Radical papers were now read in the branches. Radical lectures and speeches became not infrequent. Gapon himself expressed among his closer circle more sympathy for the revolutionary movement. The Socialist organizations of Petersburg had to change their view of the Gathering, though they still mistrusted the leader.

The Gathering grew. In December, 1904, it had eleven branches with a membership of nearly 8,000.

Late in December, four members of the Gathering, employees of the Putilov plant, were discharged for belonging to the organization. A meeting of all the branches was held, which adopted a schedule of demands to be presented to the administration of the plant. It elected a committee to visit the manager, the factory-inspector and the chief of police, and to put before them the claims of the workmen. The demands were not granted, and on January 3, 1905, the employees of the Putilov plant, several thousand in number, went on strike.

At that time the government was still benevolent to the Gathering. Nobody could foresee what was coming, not even Gapon.

Meetings were held every day in the halls of the Gathering, where the strike was discussed,—a privilege hitherto never enjoyed by Russian strikers. In a few days the strike-movement spread like wild-fire. On January 6, the number of strikers amounted to 140,000. Practically all industrial life in Petersburg stopped.

This was a new, tremendous movement unparalleled in the history of the previous years and unexpected by friend and foe. The workingmen themselves were surprised to see the gigantic number of strikers. The enthusiasm rose to a high pitch. The public atmosphere became heated with deep emotion. Intellectual Petersburg was partly overjoyed, partly awed by the new rising force.

The strike was not merely economic. The strikers listened with deep interest to political speeches. They had no political education, indeed; yet political problems were in the air, political agitation had been conducted by the newspapers ever since the beginning of "Spring," and in various ways those vital questions had reached the masses.

The branches of the Gathering now presented a strange aspect. Day and night they were thronged with thousands of strikers; day and night Gapon and his friends, sometimes persons from the rank and file, addressed the workingmen. The employers were firm in their decision to make no concession. The unrest of the strikers grew.

In this atmosphere was born and bred the idea of going to the Tzar to present to him personally the workmen's petition.

The idea was loyal. It was based on the assumption that the Tzar was the father of his people, the protector of the poor and the wronged. At the same time it was a revolutionary undertaking: it was a protest against law-

lessness; it was a "meddling" in governmental affairs on the part of a class supposed to be obedient and eternally silent.

The workingmen of Petersburg took up the idea. It appealed to their imagination; it thrilled their hearts. It was such a simple idea. They were no revolutionists, of course. They were loyal subjects anxious to present their grievances to the Source of all justice.

Yet the atmosphere became more and more revolutionary. New thousands joined the strike. New thousands poured into the halls of the Gathering. The spirit of the masses became more determined. Rumors were abroad that the administration would not permit the procession of the workingmen, that it would use military force. There was nothing unusual in such an action, yet the workingmen did not shrink. They only became gloomier, they clung more faithfully to Gapon and his orders.

Gapon was now the idol. Swept by the wave of public emotion, he abandoned his restraint. With flowing hair and blazing eyes, in his long black priest's robe, a symbol of unrest and enthusiasm, he appeared in the halls of the Gathering, reading and re-reading before the throngs the text of the petition, explaining every point, asking repeatedly: "Am I right? Do you agree?" and listening to the moved replies of thousands: "Yes, yes, father." . . .

Beginning January 7, Gapon warned the masses that there might be obstacles in their way, that the police might attempt to interfere. "What are you going to do then?" he asked, and the throngs replied in religious ecstasy: "Then we will die! We will all die! Lead us, father, bless us, father, for the glorious sacrifice." Later Gapon began to warn the masses that the Tzar himself might not be willing to receive them. The masses could not believe it. The masses had unlimited faith in their Tzar. It would be the greatest crime, they thought, if

G. Gapon on January 9th

he was not willing to listen to the oppressed. And when Gapon finished his incendiary speeches with the warning call: "If he won't accept us, then we have no Tzar!" the masses echoed near and far: "Then we have no Tzar!" . . .

The text of the petition, as drafted by Gapon, corrected with the growth of the movement, and adopted by the meetings in and around the Gathering halls, reads as follows:

"Sire! We, the workingmen of the city of St. Petersburg, our wives, children and old, helpless parents, have come to you, Sire, to ask for truth and protection. We have grown to be paupers, we are oppressed, we are overburdened with work, we are abused, we are not recognized as human beings, we are treated like slaves, compelled to suffer silently their bitter lot. Suffer we did, but we are driven further and further into the abyss of poverty, lawlessness and ignorance, we are strangled by despotism and arbitrariness, we cannot breathe. We are at the end of our strength, Sire. Our patience has reached its limit. We are approaching the horrifying situation where death is better than the continuation of our intolerable pains.

"Sire, we are here, more than three hundred thousand in number, but we only appear to be human beings; in truth we have not one human right, not even the right of speaking, thinking, assembling, discussing our needs, undertaking measures to improve our conditions. Every one of us who dares to raise his voice in defense of the interests of the working-class is thrown into prison, sent into exile. A good heart, a responsive soul is punished as a crime; to have sympathy with the dejected, the oppressed, the tortured is considered a penal act. Sire, is this in accord with the laws of God in whose name you reign? Can one live under such laws? Is not death better,—death for all of us, the workingmen of all Rus-

sia? Is it not better to leave the world to the capitalists and the bureaucracy that they may live and enjoy it? That is what confronts us, Sire! And that is what has brought us to the walls of your palace. Here we are seeking for the last resort. Do not refuse your people the needed help, free them from the grave of lawlessness, poverty and ignorance, give them a means of taking their fate into their own hands, throw off their shoulders the intolerable burden of the bureaucracy. It is necessary that the people take care of themselves, because they alone know their real wants. So do not refuse them, Sire, accept them; order now, immediately, that representatives of all the Russian land, of all classes and groups, convene. Let every one be equal and free in the right of election; order to this end that election for the Constituent Assembly be based on general, equal, direct and secret suffrage. This is our main request; in it and upon it everything is founded; this is the only ointment for our painful wounds; and in the absence of this our blood will continue to flow constantly, carrying us swiftly towards death.

" But this measure alone cannot remedy all our wounds. Many others are necessary, and we tell them to you, Sire, directly and openly, as to our Father. We need:

*I. Measures to counteract the ignorance and legal oppression of the Russian people:*

1. Personal freedom and inviolability, freedom of speech and the press, freedom of assemblage, freedom in religious affairs;

2. General and compulsory public education at the expense of the state.

3. Responsibility of the ministers to the people, and guarantees of lawfulness in administration.

4. Equality before the law for all without exemption.

5. Immediate rehabilitation of those punished for their convictions.

*II. Measures against the poverty of the people:*

1. Abolition of indirect taxes and introduction of direct income taxes on a progressive scale.

2. Abolition of the redemption payments, cheap credit, and gradual transferring of the land to the people.

*III. Measures against oppression of labor by capital:*

1. Protection of labor by legislation.

2. Freedom of consumers' and producers' leagues and trades unions.

3. An eight-hour work-day and a regulation of overtime.

4. Freedom of struggle against capital (freedom of labor strikes).

5. Participation of labor representatives in the framing of a bill concerning state insurance of workingmen.

6. Normal wages.

"Those are, Sire, the principal wants with which we have come to you. Let your decree be known, swear that you will satisfy them, and you will make Russia happy and glorious, and your name will be branded in our hearts and in the hearts of our posterity for ever and ever. If, however, you will not reply to our prayer, we shall die here, on the place before your palace. We have no other refuge and no other means. We have two roads before us, one to freedom and happiness, the other to the grave. Tell us, Sire, which, and we will follow obediently, and if it be the road of death: let our lives be a sacrifice for suffering-wearied Russia. We do not regret the sacrifice, we bring it willingly."

The text of the petition was known all over Petersburg. Intellectual society was in perfect sympathy with Gapon and his plan. Everybody was full of apprehension. The police did not interfere with the meetings in the Gathering halls; the authorities did not arrest Gapon, perhaps because they were perturbed themselves by the dimensions of the movement. Yet dark rumors filled the capital. The chief of police ordered the newspapers

to publish nothing about the strike, not even to mention it. Sunday, January 9th, was the appointed day for presenting the petition. On the eve of that day the chief of police gave out a warning to the population not to crowd the streets on Sunday. Simultaneously, an extensive mobilization of the police forces and the troops took place. It was evident that the government had adopted a definite plan.

On January 8th, Gapon, who for several days had not slept at home for fear of arrest, addressed a letter to the Minister of the Interior. It ran thus:

"Your Excellency:—

"The workingmen and other citizens of St. Petersburg of various classes desire to and must see the Tzar on January 9th, at 2 P.M., on the Palace Square, to tell him their most pressing needs, the needs of the Russian nation.

"The Tzar has nothing to fear. I, as the representative of the gatherings of industrial workers, my assistants and my comrades the workingmen, including the so-called revolutionary groups of various programs, vouch for his safety. Let him step forth, a real monarch with a manly heart, let him approach the people and receive our petition from hand to hand. His welfare requires this; as does the welfare of the inhabitants of Petersburg and that of our Fatherland. In case of refusal, the moral bond will be broken that still unites the Russian Tzar with the Russian people.

"It is your duty, your moral duty before the Tzar and the entire Russian people, immediately to inform His Majesty and to transmit to him the petition here inclosed.

"Tell the Tzar that I, the workingmen and many thousands of citizens, peacefully and with faith in His Majesty, have determined to march to the Winter Palace. Our determination is irrevocable.

"Let him, in his turn, show faith in us, not through a manifesto, but in actual deed.

"A copy of this, as documentary evidence of a moral protest, has been taken and will be made known to the entire Russian people.

"PRIEST GEORGE GAPON

"And eleven deputies of the workmen."

"Petersburg, January 8, 1905."

No reply was received from the minister.

On Saturday evening a number of intellectuals, mainly writers, assembled in the office of the radical daily *Nashi Dni* to discuss the situation. The meeting elected a committee to visit Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski and the president of the Cabinet, S. J. Wittee, and ask them to avoid bloodshed. Prince Mirski did not receive the committee; his assistant advised them to persuade the workingmen to abstain from their plan, and Witte replied that he had no power to interfere.

In the meantime, the city was practically given over to the military authorities. In each district a military staff was established. Soldier detachments, equipped with ammunition, were hidden in the court-yards. The silence of the night before January 9th was full of unspeakable dread.

Sunday came, a bright day with the sunlight sparkling on the white snow and a blue sky overhead. The workingmen gathered around their halls and formed marching columns. There were no red flags. The front ranks carried portraits of the Tzar and the royal family; gonfalons floated over the tens of thousands of marchers. The workingmen, young and old, men and women, were in a religious ecstasy; they sang religious hymns and looked very much like a religious procession.

The military guards and the police allowed them to proceed from the suburbs to the Winter Palace. The enthusiasm of the crowds grew. Yes, they were going to

see their father, nobody would stand in their way. A Russian conservative, a member of a patriotic organization, Dr. Dyatchkov, afterwards said in his affidavit: "The picture was of such a character that I, an orthodox Russian, devoted to our Absolute Monarch, loving our history and the ancient traditions of unity between the Absolute Tzar and his faithful people, had no doubt in my mind that no one would shoot, that no one would dare to shoot."

When the square before the Winter Palace was filled with thousands of workingmen, and with thousands of onlookers drawn by the unusual sight, squads of soldiers appeared. Without warning they shot a number of volleys into the densest part of the crowd. More than 500 were killed; between 2,500 and 3,000 were wounded. The rest fled in panic. The white snow in front of the Palace turned red.*

The impression created by January 9th on Russia was enormous, its political consequences inestimable. All and everybody knew: January 9th was the beginning of the Russian revolution.

A year later, the *Courier of Europe,* a leading moderate monthly, thus described the rôle of January 9th:

"January 9, 1905, is a historic day in the life of Russia; few equal it in the past; few, probably, will equal it in the future. Not by the blood that was shed will it be remembered; not by the number of victims, dead, wounded and clubbed. The last year witnessed more than one bloody day. . . . Shooting on the unarmed was re-

* Gapon was on the square when the slaughter began. He escaped and fled abroad where he became intimately connected with the revolutionary parties. Later he returned to Russia and resumed old relations with the higher officials of the government, playing a dubious rôle among the workingmen. The Socialist-Revolutionists declared him a traitor to their cause, and by order of a secret tribunal he was executed in 1906. The true character and intentions of this man are still wrapped in mystery.

peated afterwards several times. January 9th was more than that: it was a *critical day,* critical for the form of government that had outlived itself, still more critical for the political consciousness and the faith of the people. On January 9th it became obvious that the idea of absolutism had become degraded by the bureaucratic régime, that the idea had become submerged in the latter and had disappeared. On January 9th hundreds of thousands of mystically inclined workingmen discovered that their idea of the Tzar as an omnipotent source of truth on earth and love for the people, was quite incompatible with reality. *Their faith in the Tzar, the father of the oppressed and the wronged, was shaken.* They saw now clearly that the old antithesis: Tzar and people on one side, bureaucrats and exploiters on the other, was entirely obsolete." *

Immediately after January 9th, the idea of *armed resistance* and an *armed revolution* sprang up. On the evening of January 9th a meeting of over seven hundred intellectuals, practically the flower of thinking Petersburg, was held in the rooms of the Free Economic Society. The meeting in itself was an extraordinary event. The surroundings made it still more significant. Outside, the streets were dark, the electric plants having gone on strike. Gloom hovered over the huge city. Here and there fires were burning and figures of soldiers, rifle in hand, loomed mysteriously in the midst of creeping shadows. Inside, intellectual Petersburg, deeply moved by the day's events, was discussing means of continuing the struggle. There was already a common opinion that the people had to be provided with arms. Reports were made on the attitude of the working population. The masses were enraged, aflame with anger and indignation, but by no means downcast. On the Vasilyevski Island, populated with workingmen, a barricade had been constructed in the afternoon and resistance had been offered

* *Courier of Europe,* February, 1906, "Social Chronicle."

to the police. In many other places, collisions between the people and the troops took place. The news was received by the meeting with storms of applause.

January 9th thus united intellectual and laboring Russia in one revolutionary bond.

The government now saw fit to do something. The Tzar gave 50,000 rubles out of his private means for the families of the killed and wounded (which amounted to about fifteen rubles per family). On January 19th a reception of a labor deputation by the Tzar was staged. Fourteen old, "loyal" workingmen, authorized by no labor organization, were picked up by the authorities, brought to the Winter Palace and, after a stern lesson as to the etiquette of bowing, were led before the eyes of the Tzar, who made the following address:

"I have called you in order that you may hear my words from me personally and transmit them to your comrades.

"The sorrowful events which have occurred, with the sad but inavoidable consequences of disorder, took place because you allowed yourselves to be lured and deceived by traitors and enemies of our Fatherland.

"Asking you to present to me a petition dealing with your needs, they aroused you to rebel against me and my government and forcefully deterred you from honest labor.

"Strikes and meetings only incite the unemployed crowds to disturbances which have always compelled and always will compel the authorities to resort to armed force; this, in its turn, results in suffering to innocent persons.

"I know that the life of a workingman is not easy. There is much to be improved and regulated. In my care for the working people I shall see to it that this situation is improved.

"I believe in the honest feelings of the working peo-

ple and in their unshakable loyalty to me, and therefore *I forgive them their guilt.*"

At the end of January, a commission was appointed " to investigate the causes of labor unrest in Petersburg and its suburbs and to find means of avoiding them in the future " (The Shidlovsky Commission). Representatives of capital and labor were to participate in the Commission. The workingmen of Petersburg demanded that their representatives be freely elected, that their number in the Commission be equal to that of the representatives of capital, that the sessions of the Commission be public, that freedom of speech be granted to the labor representatives, and that the workingmen arrested on January 9th be released (the Tzar had " forgiven the workingmen their guilt," yet the prisons were full).

These demands were rejected. The workingmen then decided to boycott the Commission. A vigorous agitation was conducted in the factories of Petersburg which added much to the political enlightening of the working population. Soon the Commission itself was abandoned. The government indirectly admitted that it had no means of appeasing labor.

The Holy Synod issued a circular containing the intelligence that the labor-movement in Russia was supported by Japanese money. This was a keynote for the reactionary press, which attacked the revolutionary movement as a conspiracy against Russia initiated by Russia's enemies and carried out by non-Russian inhabitants of the country.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CHORUS OF MANY VOICES

JANUARY 9, 1905, was the starting-point for a large *national* movement comprising all classes, all groups, all parties and all nationalities of Russia. There was not a town or a village where the voices of revolutionary Russia were not heard; there was not a form of mass-movement that was not tried.

Immediately after January 9th, the border-provinces of Russia, populated by Poles, Jews, Letts, Caucasians, arose. General strikes of entire cities encircled Russia with a ring of flame. Riga, Libau, Warsaw, Lodz, Vilna, Minsk, Tiflis, Batum and scores of other cities manifested an unusually high pressure of revolutionary spirit and a clear understanding of the necessary political changes. In every one of these cities life was entirely stopped for several days. Huge meetings were held, encounters with the troops repeatedly occurred; in many instances the electric plants stopped work, and the cities were all dark. The revolutionary organizations, mainly Socialists of all factions, were very active. Contrary to the Petersburg movement, the masses in the border provinces were closely connected with the secret revolutionary organizations, receiving directions from their local committees and supporting their slogans. The most popular slogans of that time were: an immediate suspension of the war and the calling of a Constituent Assembly to establish a new order in Russia.

The author of this work happened to observe the movement in Riga in the first half of January. Here, as elsewhere, the rush of the masses exceeded all expectations of the revolutionary committees. True, the committees

had issued proclamations calling for a strike. But while in former months comparatively small numbers of workingmen used to answer the call, now more than 60,000, practically all the working-population of Riga, went on strike. No economic demands were made, the movemen being purely political. The city suddenly became a scene of turmoil. Masses thronged the streets; cars stopped; many stores closed; thousands of sympathetic onlookers crowded the pavements, the balconies and the windows. Revolutionary speeches were made openly, in front of the police. The orators were mainly members of the revolutionary organizations, but there were also others, students, intellectuals, who were swept by the current. The masses cheered. Joy mingled with anguish filled the hearts of the crowds. The police were powerless, but the city was now under martial law. Troops were marching through the streets; sometimes they would pass leaving the crowds intact; sometimes they used their bayonets in dispersing the meetings. Often the people offered resistance; stones were thrown at the soldiers, clubs were brandished. The soldiers opened fire. In one day, according to official reports, which usually minimized the extent of the movement, twenty-two were killed and sixty wounded by the troops.

This added oil to the fire. The entire city was seething with indignation. A funeral march was organized the next day. Red and black flags were carried in front of the coffins; behind, a procession of more than 30,000 citizens followed. The authorities did not try to interfere with the demonstration.

In a similar way the movement proceeded in all the other cities of the border provinces. The political character of the movement was more pronounced here, partly because the general level of education was higher than in the central Russian provinces, partly because the population was under a severer pressure of administrative lawlessness. There were little towns in Lithuania where

for a day or two, before the arrival of troops, the old administration was discharged by revolutionary crowds and new officials were appointed by the revolutionary committees.

At the bottom of the entire upheaval, however, lay the economic interests of the labor masses. It was a strike for economic improvements that started the snow-ball of January 9th rolling. It was a deep dissatisfaction with labor-conditions that called the masses into the streets of Riga, Warsaw, Baku. And this economic undercurrent was especially evident when the movement reached the central Russian provinces. Here, the socialist organization had less influence; the labor-movement was of a more elementary character, and what the strikers demanded was, first of all, higher pay and shorter hours of labor, though they seldom forgot to add also political demands.

The strike-movement assumed after January 9th the character of an epidemic. There was no trade, no occupation, no industrial center in which large strikes did not take place. A conservative observer thus describes the situation: "Strikes are rolling over Russia as feather-grass over the steppe, outrunning each other, from Petersburg to Baku, from Warsaw to the heart of Siberia. Everybody is engaged in a strike, workingmen, students, railway-conductors, professors, cigarette-makers, pharmacists, lawyers, barbers, shop-clerks, telegraphists, school-boys. The tremendous and the awe-inspiring is mingled with the strange and comical. The atmosphere is overcharged with a kind of irritating electricity. Here and there lightning flashes up and disappears. Timid people cross themselves asking: "What is going to happen? What is going to happen?"

The railroads soon joined the strike-movement. There was no general strike on the railroads, but one line after another was tied up for a few days, the employees demanding, and often receiving concessions.

No exact figures as to the number of strikers in 1905

are available. The official *Strike Statistics in 1905,* comprising only such industrial concerns as were under the jurisdiction of the factory-inspection, puts the number of strikes at 13,110 and the number of strikers at 2,709,-695. These figures, says the official reviewer, are "unparalleled not only in the strike-history of Russia for the last ten years, but in the history of the world. The strike-movement of Russia was five times stronger than that of America or Germany and ten times stronger than that of France. The number of strikes in Russia exceeded that in the seven greatest industrial countries of the world for the year 1900." *

This huge movement was not organized at all. There was no national body to direct the strikes, to give them unity and a clear purpose. There were no local bodies responsible for the beginning and the end of a strike. Not even strike-committees of a temporary character were common. Without strike-funds, without experience in concerted action, without knowledge of the financial conditions of their employers or of the labor market, the workingmen of the various trades plunged into one strike after another. The strike-movement of 1905 was more of a spontaneous outburst of energy, a blind thrust of a power just awakening to public life, than a self-conscious political and social movement.

However, this movement was a great menace to the government. It was too vigorous, too obstinate, too elemental in its onslaught. It manifested a deep, tremendous source of revolutionary power.

Soon rural Russia joined in. It was as if sparks from the city-conflagrations reached the villages and provoked the peasants to new revolts. A general agrarian movement spread in February and March over vast areas of Russia, covering practically every province. The typical movement in central Russia was that of looting

* Quoted from D. Koltzov, "Labor in 1905-07," in the collection *Social Movement,* Vol. II, Part 1, p. 253.

the landlords' mansions and robbing their stores of wheat, rye, potatoes. The participants in such attacks were severely punished, but no penalty was able to stop the revolts. In the border provinces the agrarian movement was more organized, assuming sometimes the forms of peasants' and laborers' strikes.

Towards the spring of 1905, all Russia was in commotion. The secret revolutionary organizations gained influence every day. Their membership increased enormously. Large numbers of students and political refugees secretly returned from abroad to join the revolutionary committees. Russia was literally flooded with revolutionary printed matter. Attempts on the lives of officials, high and low, became very numerous. Every day the papers had to note: such and so many policemen, captains, chiefs of police, gendarmerie officers, etc., were killed. A member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, Kalyayev, assassinated Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovitch, the Tzar's uncle.

In the meantime the Russian army was suffering one disastrous defeat after the other. In February it lost the battle at Mukden. In May, the destruction of the Russian battle-fleet near Tsushima, shocked the people deeply; press-revelations were stunning even those who knew very well the nature of the Russian bureaucracy.

The government became uneasy. It began to yield. From spring to the end of 1905 it made concessions to the progressive forces, but it did so reluctantly, half-heartedly, with no determination to keep its promise. The more it yielded, the more impatient the people became; and the more insistent the movement grew, the more the government yielded.

On February 18, 1905, occurred the first breach in the wall of absolutism. In a rescript in the name of the Minister of the Interior, the Tzar made known his intention to create a representative body. "Continuing the imperial work of my crowned ancestors in uniting and

organizing the Russian land," the rescript said, "I have now conceived the design of drawing, with the help of God, the most worthy persons vested with the confidence of and elected by the people, to partake in the preliminary elaboration and discussion of legislative measures."

This meant a consulting board elected by the people, with no power to do legislative work. No definite term was set for the realization of the promise.

Simultaneously the Tzar granted the *right of petitions*. In an ukase to the Senate he allowed private persons and institutions to present to the Emperor their "views and propositions as to the questions of perfecting the governmental order or improving the people's welfare." The Tzar thus made legal the act for which the workingmen of Petersburg had been shot on January 9th.

The right of petitions gave new impetus to the social unrest. It was especially welcome to liberal groups and organizations which were opposed to illegal methods. Such were the Zemstvos, the municipal councils, the unions of professionals, the liberal capitalists and many groups of intellectuals.

The campaign had been opened by the professors. Shortly after January 9th, sixteen academicians, 125 full-fledged professors and over 200 assistant professors issued a declaration stating that academic reforms and liberty of knowledge would be possible only after "representatives of the population, freely elected, assume legislative power and control over the administration." After February 18th a storm of resolutions, petitions and addresses from Zemstvos and municipal councils arose. Many of the resolutions were very radical, but even the most moderate declared a constitutional order and civic freedom to be of vital necessity for the people. The Zemstvos and municipal councils did not merely act individually. Four conventions of Zemstvos and several conferences of municipal councils and city mayors were held during the spring and summer of 1905. On May

24th, a joint convention of Zemstvos and cities adopted an address to be presented to the Tzar. A delegation of twelve, elected by the convention, were admitted to the Tzar on June 6th and handed him the address, which reads in part:

"Sire! The criminal negligence and corruption of your advisers has plunged Russia into a disastrous war. Our army has not been able to vanquish the foe, our battle-fleet is destroyed, and, more menacing than external danger, internal conflicts are ablaze. . . . Sire, for the sake of Russia's safety, for the sake of order and internal peace, we beg you to issue an order calling representatives of the people elected equally and without discrimination by all your subjects; let them decide in agreement with you the vital question of the state, the question of war and peace. . . . Let them manifest to all the nations not a Russia full of dissensions, breaking down in internal conflicts, but a Russia cured, powerful in her regeneration, united around the national banner; let them establish in harmony with you a new political order."

The Tzar replied: "Have no doubt. My imperial resolution to call representatives of the people is firm. They will rightly be admitted to the work of the state. I follow this question every day and I am behind it."

This was a little more gracious than the advice to give up "absurd illusions," but still it was as obscure politically as it was awkward grammatically. Russia could hardly be satisfied with such a reply.

Liberal Russia, however, was full of hope. The government seemed to be disorganized, its self-confidence shaken. Ardent supporters of the old régime, such as the chairmen of the provincial nobility-councils, admitted at their convention that "only a shadow of the government remained; that all over Russia people's minds were seeth-

ing and their emotions aflame; that most moderate citizens would have to admit that the government had morally collapsed." It seemed evident that, driven by public opinion, instigated by the unanimous demand of the entire nation it would be compelled to keep its promise. Liberal Russia, therefore, bombarded the government with petitions, addresses and resolutions; it draughted plans of a constitution, discussed at meetings and conferences the most vital points of a constitutional government and even the details of the coming Russian constitution, and was gradually crystallizing into several factions.

The intellectuals outside of the Zemstvos and municipal councils organized in "Unions" according to their professions. There were "Unions" of writers, lawyers, school-teachers, professors, engineers, agriculturists, statisticians, physicians, veterinarians, etc., all founded after January 9th in the course of two or three months. The Unions were organized on a *national* scale, having branches in every large city and a central office in Petersburg. Their primary purpose appeared to be the protection of their professional interests; the organizations, however, were mainly political. The professional needs of each particular Union were used only as a basis for a political declaration stating that the profession could not flourish under autocracy and that the calling of a constituent assembly on the basis of universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage was the urgent demand of the time. The various Unions were represented in a federated Central Union having its seat in Petersburg. The Central Union included also the Union of railroad employees and the Union of post and telegraph clerks. As an example of the Union-programs, the declaration of the Union of railroad employees may be quoted (adopted at a convention in Moscow, April 20-21): "The aim of the Union is the protection of the material, legal, cultural and professional interests of the railroad employees, which can be achieved only when life is dominated by a demo-

cratic idea. It is, therefore, the primary and most urgent task of the Union to demand the creation of conditions making the unhampered development of democratic ideas possible. As a logical means to this, the Union demands that representatives of the people be immediately called on the principle of universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage without discrimination as to sex, nationality or creed."

The " Central Union " was a great revolutionary factor in 1905. It followed the tactics of *ignoring* legal restrictions of press, speech and assemblage. It openly called meetings, conventions and conferences; it published resolutions in the newspapers; it conducted a vigorous campaign for a Constituent Assembly. And such was the confusion of the government, that it did not interfere. The Central Union was not socialistic in its program, although it included many socialist members; yet it was far more radical than the Zemstvos and the municipal councils. In fact, the Central Union held the balance between the extreme revolutionists, the Social Democrats and Social-Revolutionists, and the liberal Zemstvos.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CHORUS OF MANY VOICES (*Continued*)

THE wealthy industrial classes were by no means radical. They had lived in harmony with the old administration, which tried to make them concessions and to satisfy their wants. However, they were not vitally connected with absolutism, and they were vitally interested in political reforms opening brighter prospects for industrial progress. January 9th and the following months of political unrest stimulated the representatives of industry and commerce to join the movement.

On January 31, 1905, the Petersburg manufacturers' association adopted the text of a memorandum to be presented to the Minister of Finance. The memorandum reads in part: "The industrial prosperity of the end of the last decade was soon superseded by a crisis and a state of depression which made it quite manifest that *industry cannot flourish where the masses suffer privation,* that a healthy growth of industry depends first of all and above all upon the *purchasing power of the people.* The metal industry, stimulated by government orders and the influx of foreign capital, soon came to the conclusion that its future and even its present depends upon the consumption of iron by the people. Such consumption presupposes *the growth of popular welfare, the spreading of education, the development of trades, the radical reconstruction of the life of the rural population,* which is now downtrodden, economically ruined and poor."

The Moscow manufacturers' association stated: "Industry is intimately connected with *a stable legal order, with guaranteed personal freedom and freedom of personal initiative, with freedom of knowledge and scientific*

*truth, with public education of the masses* supplying industry with labor *which is the less productive, the more ignorant it is.* The backwardness of Russia, due to our precarious political order, has *shattered her position in the world-market* and turned her into a secondary factor. There is no doubt that our industry and the situation of our labor-classes have been injuriously influenced by our *disordered financial system,* which can be regulated only through the participation of social elements in the discussion of the budget."

The Ural manufacturers stated in their petition: " Russia lacks both civic freedom and a firmly established legal order, and this is the cause of the disturbances in our industrial system. Backwardness of legislation is most keenly felt by agile and sensitive industry. Thus, the reform of our stock-legislation has been pending for more than thirty years, the revision of the passport system has required forty-five years and still is not completed in its main part. The new note regulations were a result of twelve commissions covering fifty-five years. The land-regulations on the Ural took half a century."

The sugar-manufacturers of Kiev declared at their convention: The sugar industry " is directly interested in the welfare of the great masses which are the main consumers of its products. The absence of freedon of speech and press, of freedom of meetings and unions, which are the inalienable rights of every citizen in every modern country, not only have a depressing effect on our private life, but, spreading apathy and limiting the intellectual horizon of our industrial life, they also *hamper the full development of the productive forces of our country.*"

Putting together all the views of the various industrial and trade organizations as expressed in their numerous petitions and resolutions, we can thus summarize the reasons for their reform demands: (1) They needed a greater internal market for their products; (2) They needed more educated labor; (3) They needed freedom

of personal initiative; (4) They needed industrial legislation complying with the rapid economic development; (5) They needed a stable legal order not dependent upon the whims of administrators; (6) They needed a stable budget and a sound financial system; (7) They were tired of temporizing with the government, which gave them orders and concessions as a personal favor; and finally (8) They were against the bureaucracy, as people engaged in modern pursuits and hating the political oppression of their own class as well as that of others.

There was, however, one more reason, perhaps more powerful than the others, for the liberal tendencies of the manufacturers; this was *their desire to appease the striking masses of labor.* Here, for the first time in many years, they came into a direct collision with the administration. The government was inclined to make the workingmen *economic concessions;* this the manufacturers opposed, demanding, however, that labor be given *political concessions.* The government tried to convince the manufacturers that the causes of unrest lay primarily in the labor-conditions of the working population; the manufacturers replied that no real betterment of labor conditions was possible unless political freedom were granted. This conflict between industry and the administration lasted during the whole of 1905 and added greatly to the general unrest.

As early as January 24, 1905, the Minister of Finance, at a conference with 400 Petersburg manufacturers, insisted on the urgency of improvements in labor-conditions. In preparing for this conference, the manufacturers had had a number of preliminary meetings, where they decided that " general demands of the workingmen (such as an eight-hour work-day, the abolition of fines, the participation of the workingmen in the elaboration of factory-rules) *should not be discussed,"* as they could be decided only by legislation; as to particular local demands in each factory, the manufacturers

had come to a conclusion that "as a general rule, it was undesirable to have any binding agreements with labor, although, in view of the unrest, negotiations were a necessity." At the conference, where these resolutions were made known, the Minister, in a vigorous speech, criticized the attitude of the employees. "The issuance of new labor-laws," he said, "cannot do away with the necessity of measures less decisive and less general, but more prompt and more easily realized." The Minister urged the manufacturers to comply with the wishes and hopes of the government, the press and public opinion. The manufacturers gave no definite promise. The government appointed a commission on labor-conditions (the Shidlovski Commission) which was to lay out a plan of concessions to labor at the expense of the manufacturers. This excited the opposition of capital. "Industry cannot work at a loss," the Petersburg manufacturers' association declared in a memorandum, "neither can it be actuated by motives of charity. Industry is working under a hard strain and is giving as much as it can. The appeal to the manufacturers to satisfy labor demands gives ground to the assumption that the economic conditions of the workingmen are looked upon as one of the main factors in creating the recent disturbances. This opinion, however, is erroneous. Not even a full satisfaction of all labor demands would be able to restore peace and order, the labor-movement having its source not in the consciousness of economic difficulties, but in the influence of the environment."

The attitude of the Petersburg manufacturers is more clearly expressed in another memorandum. "No concessions to labor in particular points, nor a general revision of the labor laws," the memorandum reads, "can appease the restless laborers. The real and only effective means of quieting the labor-movement in the future or at least of diminishing its present acuteness, is through *reforms of a general political character.*"

" What are the manufacturers alone in a position to do for the improvement of labor conditions? " the iron manufacturers asked in a memorandum. " At the best, they could give up their legitimate incomes from capital and turn them over to labor to improve its conditions, i.e., they could turn industry into charity." The iron-manufacturers see another way out of the difficulty, namely " fundamental reforms, as urged by the Zemstvo-representatives, by the municipal councils and various other groups and classes."

The same attitude was held by the manufacturers all over the country. In many instances capital was disquieted not only on account of the economic concessions demanded, but because the revolts were a menace to the very existence of their enterprises. " A greater menace than the labor-movement is for the sugar industry the approaching storm of peasant revolts," the sugar manufacturers declared. " Armed forces may be able to protect manufacturers in the cities against the increasing labor-movement; detachments of soldiers may guard the urban industrial concerns against the violence of a riotous mob. But what could be strong enough to protect our factories and estates, scattered over the immense stretches of our country? "

The government, however, saw in economic concessions an effective means to restore order. Minister of Finance Kokovtzev planned the establishment of a ten-hour workday and many other reforms of a non-political character. At a meeting of a commission on labor legislation under his presidency, Kokovtzev, on March 16, 1905, addressed 130 representatives of manufacturers' associations. " The government has been accused," he said, " of granting concessions to labor without the necessary caution and of having as its sole aim the restoration of order even if this had to be accomplished at the expense of the employees. It is intimated, further, that the present movement was provoked by political propaganda only.

The truth is that if the political propaganda was able to exert such an influence over the workingmen, this was due to the conditions of their life which are sometimes extremely hard and miserable. As organic diseases develop in the spots of least resistance, so political diseases find the most favorable medium among the exploited, the needy and the poor."

To this speech the chairman of the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce replied that the only reforms which would pacify the labor-movement were political reforms, as demanded by all classes and groups of the population.

As months passed and the general unrest became of a larger scope and of a more menacing character, the manufacturers became bolder in their attack on the administration, which was now compelled to turn its attention to political reforms. "We cannot live any longer under such conditions!" the Nishni-Novgorod Chamber of Commerce declared in October, 1905. "We need order as we need air to breathe!"

For the same reasons, the nobility, the large landlords, connected as they were with the old régime, began to urge the government to grant reforms. Fundamentally, the noble landlords, as represented by the provincial councils of the nobility, were strongly in favor of autocracy. Their reform-demands did not go further than the establishment of a consulting national body to be elected by the people. Such a body, declared a convention of the chairmen of the provincial nobility-councils, would give the Tzar an opportunity to know the wishes of the people and to act in accordance with them. It was the old slavophilic idea put into practice,—that of abandoning the bureaucratic "partition" between the absolute monarch and his people, by creating an advisory board from the people themselves. With the development of the revolutionary movement and the growth of peasant revolts—making life on the landlords' estates utterly intolerable, the landlords became more impatient. Many

of them began to criticize the inefficiency of the administration and to demand thoroughgoing reforms.

Let us now pause for a moment and cast a glance over Russia as she appeared towards the autumn of 1905.

A tremendous social and political unrest, an incessant shaking of all the foundations of life. Strikes of workingmen spreading, surging up, disappearing and spreading again; strikes of a political character culminating in demands for an eight-hour work-day and higher wages; strikes of an economic character ending with the demand for a Constituent Assembly on the basis of general, equal, direct and secret suffrage; strikes of peasant-workers in the rural districts ending with attacks on the property of landlords; strikes of railroads tying up for a while the traffic in portions of the country. Street demonstrations in the cities, accompanied by rifle fire of the police and the soldiers; revolts in the village, with burning corn-stacks and noble mansions illuminating the horizon at night, with thousands of peasants killed, wounded or imprisoned. Endless meetings of workingmen, of intellectuals, of manufacturers, of landowners, of peasants, clamoring, criticizing, condemning, demanding. Endless encounters with the police and the military forces in village and town, resulting sometimes in the construction of barricades, in organized armed resistance. Defeats on the battlefields and then a shameful peace with the loss of Russian territory. Shaken finances, shaken credit, shaken confidence in the administration. . . . The army still remained loyal, but on June 14th, the battleship "Potyomkin," cruising on the Black Sea, hoisted a red flag; the crew captured the officers and hastened to the support of Odessa strikers then in sharp conflict with the administration. The "Potyomkin," joined by a battle-cruiser, soon surrendered to the superior force of the loyal navy, but the rebellion was of great significance: it showed that the army, demoralized by the Russo-Japanese war

and influenced by the revolutionists, was not perfectly safe.

The demands, economic and political, varied in radicalism; there were, however, two central points supported by the majority of the organized groups and factions and, evidently, by the majority of the people themselves. One demand was political: civic freedom; total abolition of absolutism; establishment of a constitutional government responsible to a parliament elected by the people on the basis of universal suffrage. Another demand was economic: confiscation of the large landed estates, creation of a land-fund to supply the needy peasants with land for a moderate rent. As to the mode of confiscation, the Socialist parties demanded that the land be taken away from the owners without compensation, while the moderate groups (Zemstvos, etc.) insisted that the landowners should be remunerated from the state treasury for the loss of their land. Late in the summer of 1905 the Peasant-Union was organized, a loose representation of certain groups of revolutionary peasants in various provinces. The Union also demanded the confiscation of the landed estates; it made, however, no general statement as to the mode of expropriation, admitting that under certain circumstances the owners might be paid for their land.*

Confronted with all these enormous movements, rebellions and insurrections, the government yielded, but always too late. On April 17th it abandoned some of the religious restrictions; on August 6th it published the methods of election to the representative body, to be called the Imperial Duma (Council)—an institution vested with the right to *discuss* bills but not to *vote* them; on August 27th it granted autonomy to the universities. All these reforms were of great importance, yet they satisfied nobody. The main feature of Russian public

* P. Maslov, *Peasant Movements,* 1905-07, p. 237, in the collection *Social Movements,* Vol. II, Book 2.

life, absolutism, still remained untouched. The right to pass laws at liberty remained in the hands of the administration. Freedom of speech, press, assemblage, etc., was not granted, although the masses forcibly and in disobedience to the law, sometimes imperiling their very lives, introduced in Russia the practice of free speech and free press. This led to innumerable attacks on the part of the administration. Thus, three weeks after the publication of the quasi-constitution, a peaceful meeting in Tiflis, in the city hall, was fired upon by a squad of soldiers, and over 100 persons were killed and wounded.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE SECOND ACT: OCTOBER 17

EARLY in September the universities opened under the autonomous order. The students decided to stop their strike of the previous winter and spring, to keep the universities open and to place the auditoriums at the disposal of the people. Soon the universities became headquarters of the revolution. Tremendous meetings of students, of professional folk, of workingmen, were held by day and night; revolutionary committees almost abandoned their secrecy, having offices and sessions within the walls of the universities. And such was the paradox of Russian life at that time, that the administration did not interfere. Meetings in towns were forbidden, dispersed by military force. Meetings on the university-grounds were undisturbed.

No wonder everybody flocked to the universities and to the other high educational institutions. There was now a constant current of ideas, feelings and plans between the universities and the workshops, the railroad stations, the printing presses. Here, in the abodes of learning, slogans were formulated, tactics were decided upon, plans were elaborated. The floods of revolutionary energy were rising higher and higher. The air was charged with storm.

Soon the *general October-strike* began.

Nobody had organized it. Nobody had planned it. Nobody could have foreseen it. It came spontaneously. It spread with elemental force, and soon the entire country was in the grip of this enormous movement.

It started with a strike of typographical employees in Moscow. By September 24th, there were on strike fifty

presses with 5,900 workingmen. The strikers gathered in the streets; the police dispersed them, shooting and killing. On October 2nd their Petersburg comrades of the same trade went on a sympathetic strike. On October 7th, the railroads of the Moscow net began to stop work one after the other. "Spasms of the heart began," as the *Movoye Vremya* expressed it. The strike spread on October 7th over the Moscow-Kazan line, on October 8th over the Moscow-Yaroslav, Moscow-Nishni Novgorod and Moscow-Kursk lines, on October 9th over the Moscow-Kiev-Voronesh and the Moscow-Brest lines. Simultaneously various trades and professions went on strike. On October 10th, the Nicholas line, connecting Petersburg with Moscow, stopped. In a few days the railroad strike spread from the center to the periphery of the enormous country and soon all of the 40,000 kilometers of Russian railroads, employing over 750,000 men, were at a standstill. The post-office joined. Many telegraph lines joined. The tendency towards a general strike grew. Most Russian factories, plants and shops stopped work. Office clerks, Zemstvo-employees, bank-clerks, city-clerks, went on strike. Most of the stores, piers, warehouses were closed. Communication between provinces and cities ceased. Prices of food jumped up. Innumerable meetings were held, the general slogan being a Constituent Assembly. In many cities the crowds attacked gun-smiths' shops, seizing their arms. In a few cities barricades were constructed, street-cars were overturned, telegraph poles cut, paving-stones gathered and used as a protection against military attacks.

The excitement reached its climax. The strike was an onslaught unknown not only in Russia but in the history of the world. The strike was readily supported by all progressive classes, groups and factions. The municipal councils demanded that the administration do something. Many city-councils had joint meetings with the political organizations, including the revolutionary socialist com-

mittees. In a few cities committees of public safety were formed.

The central government was panic stricken. The army was not entirely reliable. Soldiers and officers began to be seen at revolutionary meetings. Besides, the railroad-strike set insurmountable obstacles to military operations. The post-office strike added to the demoralization of the authorities. The strike seemed to be unconquerable. The government was utterly alone. Trains between Petersburg and Tsarskoye Selo, the residence of the Tzar, did not run. The Minister of Justice, after leaving Tsarskoye Selo on October 14th, could not reach Petersburg by train and was compelled to hire horses. The ministers were hampered in their communication with the Tzar. The situation looked hopeless.

The government yielded. On October 17th the following manifesto was issued:

"By the grace of God, We, Nicholas II, Emperor and Absolute Monarch of all Russia, Tzar of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., etc., etc.

"Disturbances and unrest in the capitals and in many places of our Empire fill our heart with a great and painful grief. The welfare of the Russian Monarch is indissolubly connected with the welfare of the people, and their grief is his grief. The present disturbances may cause a deep disorder in the people and be a menace to the integrity and unity of our Empire.

"The great oath of Imperial service enjoins us to endeavor with all our might to bring about the cessation of disturbances perilous to the State. Having ordered the proper authorities to take measures against the direct manifestations of disorder, riots and violent acts and to protect peaceful people eager to do their duty, we, in order to carry through the general measures outlined by us for pacifying the national life, have found it necessary to unify the activities of the higher government.

"We make it the duty of the government to execute our firm will:

1. To grant the people the unshakable foundations of civic freedom on the basis or real personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, of speech, of assemblage and of unions.

2. To admit now to participation in the Imperial Duma, without stopping the pending elections and in so far as it is feasible in the short time remaining before the convening of the Duma, all the classes of the population, leaving the further development of the principle of universal suffrage to the new legislative order.

3. To establish it as an unshakable rule that no law can become binding without the consent of the Imperial Duma, and that the representatives of the people must be guaranteed a real participation in the control over the lawfulness of the authorities appointed by us.

"We call on all faithful sons of Russia to remember their duty to their Fatherland, to aid in putting an end to the unprecedented disturbances and to exert with us all their power to restore quiet and peace in our native land."

Simultaneously with the manifesto, the memorandum of Count Witte, who was destined to be first president of the unified cabinet, was made public. Count Witte wrote to the Tzar: "The general unrest among the various classes of Russian society must not be considered as a result of *partial* imperfection in our political and social order, nor as a result of organized activities of the extreme parties. Its roots lie undoubtedly deeper, in the disturbed balance between the ideal aspirations of thinking Russian society and the external forms of its life. Russia has outlived the existing order. She strives towards a lawful order on the basis of civic freedom."

The act of October 17th marked a new era in the history of Russia. *On that day Russia, legally, ceased to be*

*an absolute monarchy.* " No law can become binding without the consent of the Duma " elected by the people, declared the head of the nation. Occurrences after October 17th might have been more outrageous than before. They were, however, *overt illegal acts,* or series of such acts. Herein lay the historical importance of the October-strike and its fruit, the manifesto.

The news of the granted constitutional order acted upon the people like a fresh breeze. Masses gathered in the streets in riotous joy, friends and strangers shook hands, kissed each other, wept with tears of happiness. " Citizens," " comrades " wore red flowers in their lapels, red flags waved over their heads. Passing soldiers were greeted with cheers, officers saluted the red flag, policemen looked good-naturedly upon the crowds mumbling, " nothing doing, it's freedom." But dark shadows were lurking behind the joy, and the air was full of evil bodings.

In Petersburg, the news of the manifesto became known in the evening of October 17th. The same evening Colonel Rieman, of the Imperial Body Guards Regiment, cannonaded the Technological Institute where meetings were held. On October 18th, in the morning, Cornet Frolov attacked a crowd in front of the Institute. On October 18th, at noon, Colonel Mien fired on a crowd in the Gorokhovaya Street. On October 18th, in the evening, Cossacks fired a volley on the workingmen of the Putilov plant.

Such was the beginning of the new order.

The author of this work was in the closest touch with events in Kiev. It was a beautiful autumn day when the manifesto reached the city. A blue sky was spread overhead and the yellow leaves of the numerous parks tinged the picturesque town, the beauty of the South, with gold. Floods of people rushed to the City Hall through the broad sunlit streets. Russians and Jews, Poles and Ukrainians formed one happy brotherly gathering. The

Alexandrovskaya Place was alive with thousands of eyes, bright, shining, smiling in childlike ecstasy. Currents of unutterable gladness swept the great crowd. There was no riotous mood; a holy feeling, akin to religious awe, overwhelmed all those masses whose dream seemed to have become real.

Then some one whispered a word. It fell on people's souls like molten lead. The word spread. A disquieting rumor passed from one to another. Something was happening, something fatal, dreadful, unbelievable. No, it was impossible. It was the excited fantasy of an unbalanced crank. The people listened to the speakers. They were standing on the high balcony of the City Hall, behind them the now conquered two-headed imperial eagle, in front of them the emancipated people drinking their first draught of liberty. . . . A shriek interrupted the speech, a cry of anguish. "Pogrom." In the adjoining streets the work of murder had begun. Robbers and assassins appeared on the edges of the square. The crowds fled in horror.

For three days and three nights the most hideous pogrom ever witnessed in Russia raged. The soldiers supported the robbers.

Strange to relate, we were prepared for this event. We knew that the police were agitating among the scum of the city, among ex-convicts, burglars, tramps, distributing among them incendiary literature, money and arms. We knew that rumors were being spread, that the Tzar would permit looting the "reds" and the Jews for three days. We only did not know that the machinery would be so quickly set in motion.

We soon learned that the same occurrences were repeated, with local variations, all over Russia in the first three days after the publication of the manifesto.

There was a new term that we then learned: "*The Black Hundred.*" In its feverish search for popular sup-

port, the government, isolated and compromised, had decided to create a semblance of such support in the organization of hired patriots recruited from the criminal and semi-criminal classes. These organizations were given every privilege. Their members received money, positions and other favors from the administration. Their meetings were frequented by high officials. Their actions, even the most unlawful, remained unpunished. They were actually exempt from any jurisdiction. Should a member of the Black Hundred be arrested by mistake, the arresting officer was subject to reprimand. In the years that followed, the Tzar himself was a member of the Black Hundred, and he and the little heir of the throne wore the emblem of this organization. Officially, the Black Hundreds were known as the " Association of the Russian People " and the " Association to combat the Revolution." Their membership was ridiculously small in comparison with the rôle they played in the destinies of Russia. It was only through the support of the government that they could be a menace to the people. Yet, they gave the government an opportunity to assert that it was upheld by the people. At a command from the men higher up, the Black Hundred committees organized patriotic demonstrations, petitions, patriotic church services, and, in case of urgent necessity, pogroms.

It was due to this organization that the government was able to supplement the October manifesto by a series of massacres on a very large scale. The slogan was: " Strike the intellectuals and the Jews,"—the intellectuals, because they were the leaders of the revolutions; the Jews, because they were largely represented in all the revolutionary organizations and because the practice of Jewish pogroms was an established one in Russia. The number of places where pogroms took place in the first two or three weeks after the manifesto, was over a hundred; the number of persons killed in those pogroms,—3,500-

4,000; the number of wounded, over 10,000.* The massacre of Tomsk must be especially mentioned. In this city 150 were killed, 50 wounded and 1,000 burned. There was a meeting of citizens in Tomsk celebrating the manifesto. Throngs of people returning from the meeting were encountered by a procession of the Black Hundred. The citizens were unarmed. They fled into the theater and one of the railroad buildings. The "patriots" surrounded both buildings and set them on fire. Those who tried to escape were killed. Soldiers appeared on the scene and began to fire through the windows of the burning theater. Not far away, the governor was standing on the balcony of his palace calmly observing the battlefield; in the nearby cathedral the priests continued their service.

In this way old Russia showed that it was not dead, that it was going to struggle for its existence. Young Russia, however, was still confident. It began to act as if absolutism were really broken. The revolutionary organizations left their "underground" abodes and established themselves openly in the face of the administration. Political clubs began to organize. Labor unions sprang up almost every day. The press threw off the censorship. In many cities the revolutionary crowds opened the prisons and freed the confined revolutionists. The clamor for a political amnesty was so unanimous and so loud that the government was compelled to declare, on October 21st, a partial amnesty. On November 3rd, the government, to pacify the peasants, abolished all the remaining redemption-payments. On November 24th, censorship was legally abandoned by an administrative decree. Russia was impetuously organizing. Part of the Zemstvo liberals, together with other intellectuals, formed a liberal political party under the name *Constitutional*

* V. Obninski, *Half a Year of Russian Revolution*, p. 42. Corroborated by E. Mayevski in the collection on *Social Movements*, Vol. II, Book 1, p. 103.

*Democrats* ("C. D.") with a very radical program. Another part of the Zemstvo liberals, together with representatives of industry and trade, formed the party of *Octobrists* with a more moderate liberal program. Many other parties sprang up which had only a short life. Each party had its organs. Newspapers and other publications spoke now in a language hitherto used only by the illegal press. It seemed that Russia had entered a new era and was making rapid progress on her way towards a happy future. Again and again, however, new Russia found itself in conflict with the power of the old régime, and as of old every step of freedom was accompanied by bloodshed and lawless oppression.

The situation in Russia after the manifesto is very well characterized in a contemporary publication:

"And now we have been granted a constitution.

"We have been granted freedom of meetings, yet meetings are being surrounded by soldiers.

"We have been granted freedom of speech, yet the censorship remains unshaken.

"We have been granted freedom of knowledge, yet the universities are occupied by military force.

"We have been granted personal inviolability, yet the jails are full of prisoners.

"We have been granted a constitution, yet autocracy remains.

"We have been granted everything, and we have been granted nothing." *

October and November, 1905, were the crucial moment in the history of the revolution. Autocracy was shaken, but not yet broken. Russia was legally free, but freedom still had to be secured by the people. The government itself was not confident. The army showed signs of unrest. The outbreaks of mutinies among the

* *Bulletins of the Council of Labor Delegates,* October 20, 1905.

troops were partly due to the defeat in the Japanese war and the subsequent demoralization of the army, partly to the general unrest in the country. In Sebastopol the marines organized a Council of Delegates and held revolutionary meetings, sometimes jointly with labor organizations. In Grodno, Voronesh, Kiev, Moscow, Kursk, Ekaterinodar, Warsaw, Riga and other cities, the troops openly broke the military discipline, demanded improvements in barrack-life and condemned the arrogance of their superiors. In Baranovitchi they marched in the streets singing revolutionary songs. In Tiflis they freed from prison a number of revolutionists sentenced to death. In Kursk, Batum and some other places they fought battles with the loyal units. The movement was partly political, partly due to a mere riotous spirit. It was promptly quelled, yet the government was not certain of the future.

Who would ultimately win? Which side would prove the stronger?

This great question faced the country immediately after the October strike. The government was gradually recovering from the panic. It had given promises, great and solemn promises, but it did not propose to consider them binding unless compelled to do so. At this juncture, *unity of the revolutionary front was more urgent than at any moment before.* The ice was broken. Autocracy was weakened. The time had come to hammer and hammer the shaken structure until it should fall to pieces.

Unfortunately, *a split in the ranks of the revolution manifested itself immediately after the half-victory of October.* New Russia could offer no united front.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE VANQUISHED KING

"His Proletarian Majesty, the Workingman of all the Russias." This was the inscription on the first cartoon of the first magazine of political satire in Russia after the issuance of the manifesto. The working-class of Russia seemed all powerful. The working-class of Russia had carried out the general October strike. The working-class had brought the old order to its knees. The working-class had not waited to get permission from the authorities, but speedily and resolutely, amid the noise and the din of the general strike, established its own representation, the Council of Workmen Deputies, a sort of revolutionary self-government of Petersburg labor.

The Council held its first meeting on October 13th. On October 15th the number of its delegates was 226, representing ninety-six industrial concerns and five labor unions. A month later, the number of delegates was 562, representing 147 factories, thirty-four shops and sixteen labor unions. The Social-Democratic and Social-Revolutionary parties had their special representatives in the Council.

The Council was the leading body of the Petersburg workingmen, and, after the establishment of similar councils throughout the country, which followed the policies of their mother-council in Petersburg, it became, in a way, the leading body of all Russian labor. The Council ignored the existing government. It gave revolutionary orders to the workingmen of the country. It kept a watchful eye on political events. It was supposed to be the center of all revolutionary movements.

On October 14th the Council demanded that the city

"His Proletarian Majesty, the Workingman of All the Russias"

administration should provide the strikers with food, meeting-halls and money for armament. On October 15th it ordered all stores to join the strike, with the exception of food stores, which had to be kept open from 8 to 11 A.M. On October 17th it ordered the strikers, in view of their depressed economic condition, to abstain temporarily from paying rent or grocery-bills. After the publication of the manifesto, the Council demanded that the military forces should be removed from Petersburg, that a national guard should be established, that martial law should be abrogated and that a Constitutional Convention should be immediately called. Until then, it decided, the general strike should be continued. "The fight for all these demands," the resolution reads, "must be carried on. The Workmen's Council, therefore, deems it necessary that the strike should be continued until circumstances indicate the necessity of altering our tactics." This was decided on October 17th; and on October 20th the Council, seeing that the strike was weakening, adopted a resolution reading thus: "In view of the necessity for the working-class to organize on the basis of its achieved victories and to arm for a final struggle for a Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage which is to establish a democratic republic, the Council of Workmen Delegates orders that the political strike be stopped at noon, October 21st. The Council is confident, however, that, should it be required by further developments, the workingmen will resume the strike as willingly and as devotedly as heretofore."

In these two resolutions, of October 17th and October 20th, all the precariousness of the Council's situation is reflected. The Council was supposed to continue the revolution. The idea of *armed resistance* was prevailing. The Executive Committee of the Workmen's Council even purchased revolvers and guns which it distributed among the workingmen. But, what could those arms

amount to against the machine-guns and rifles of the regular army? Only extreme enthusiasts could hope to win battles in street fights against the government as long as the army remained loyal. The only effective weapon in the hand of the Council was the general strike. This weapon, however, is of such a character that the oftener and the longer it is used the less sharp its edge is rendered. The Council did not seem to realize this simple truth. It did not take into consideration that, without strike funds, without firm organizations, without the habit of discipline, the workingmen of Russia, fatigued by nearly a year of continual strikes, could not go on striking for longer periods. In this respect, as in many others, the Council only appeared to be leading, being in reality swept by the current of political emotions. It overestimated the strength of the workingmen, while underestimating the obstacles. This led to bitter disappointments.

On October 29th, influenced by the actions of many workingmen who forcibly introduced the eight-hour work-day in their factories, the Council decreed: "Beginning October 31st, all factories and shops must join the fight for an eight-hour work-day, introducing it in all factories and shops in a revolutionary way." The argument of a few members that an eight-hour work-day could not be established on short notice (one day!) and could not be introduced in Petersburg alone when in the rest of the country labor hours were longer, was ignored by the Council. "Without debate, without careful consideration by the Executive Committee, the Council adopted the eight-hour work-day resolution *par acclamation.*" Mr. Chrustalev-Nosar, the president of the Council, relates.* The resolution could not be carried out. The employees united in opposition to it. The greatest factories of Petersburg declared a lockout, and closed. Labor meetings on factory premises were for-

* *History of the Council of Workmen Deputies,* p. 103.

bidden. Factory buildings were guarded by soldiers. Armies of workingmen were left to starvation. Many workingmen, in despair, decided to resume work on former conditions (nine and ten hours). The Council then decided, on November 12th, to repeal its decision. "The government, headed by Count Witte," the resolution says, "in its endeavor to break the vigor of the revolutionary proletariat, came to the support of capital, thus turning the question of an eight-hour work-day in Petersburg into a national problem. The consequence has been, that the workingmen of Petersburg are unable now, apart from the workingmen of the entire country, to realize the decree of the Council (concerning an eight-hour work-day). The Council of Workmen Delegates, therefore, deems it necessary to stop temporarily the immediate and general establishment of an eight-hour work-day by force."

This was not the first nor the last of the Council's defeats.

On November 1st, *thirteen days after the official end of the October strike,* it ordered a second general strike, to begin November 2nd at noon. The strike was called in support of the Kronstadt rebellion and as an answer to the declaration of martial law in Poland *after* October 17th. The resolution of the Council breathes the spirit of the time. Here is its text:

"The government continues to stride over corpses. It puts on trial before a court-martial the brave Kronstadt soldiers of the army and navy who rose to the defense of their rights and of national freedom. It put the noose of martial law on the neck of oppressed Poland.

"The Council of Workmen Delegates calls on the revolutionary proletariat of Petersburg to manifest their brotherly solidarity with the revolutionary soldiers of Kronstadt and with the revolutionary proletarians of Poland through a general political strike, which has

proved to be a formidable power, and through general meetings of protest. To-morrow, *on November 2nd, at noon,* the workingmen of Petersburg will stop work, their slogans being:

1. Down with court-martial!
2. Down with capital punishment!
3. Down with martial law in Poland and all over Russia!"

Simultaneously an appeal was issued to the Petersburg garrison to support the strikers.

This second general strike was at the beginning a perfect and complete success. Working Petersburg, in a body, responded to the appeal of the Council. But now the question arose as to how long the strike should be continued. On November 4th the strike already began to slacken. On November 5th it became clear that a large number of workingmen were ready to return to work. The Council then revised its decision of the previous day and decreed that the strike should be stopped on November 7th, a noon. The second general strike proved to be a defeat in spite of the unanimous support of the revolutionary workingmen. The weapon of a general strike was crumbling away.

In the meantime the government was recovering from the shock of October. After a short intermission, arrests, house-searchings, attacks on peaceful meetings began with renewed zeal all over Russia. After a peasant convention, the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Union were arrested. Many officials of the post- and telegraph-clerks union were put into prison. Martial law was introduced in many regions. The Black Hundreds were doing their work of destruction.

In Petersburg, the government was still afraid to touch the Workmen's Council. On the contrary, it dealt with it as if it were a legitimate institution. Count Witte parleyed with delegates of the Council. Other ministers

Council of Workmen's Deputies in Petrograd
(Fall, 1905)

often repealed their orders under pressure of the Council. The Council's tone was that of the general staff of a victorious revolution. And yet, the chief of police of Petersburg truly reflected the attitude of the government when in a proclamation to the population he declared that he was "tired of the Council."

The government became more courageous every day.

On November 26th the president of the Council, Chrustalev-Nosar, was arrested. On November 27th the Executive Committee of the Council decided to appeal to the people to refuse the government recruits and taxes. On December 2nd the so-called "Financial Manifesto" urging people to pay no taxes, to refuse paper money and to withdraw deposits from the government's savings banks, was made public. Eight newspapers which reprinted the manifesto were immediately confiscated by order of the government.* On the same day, December 2nd, new strike-regulations were published by the government making it a crime to participate in a strike "menacing the safety of the state or creating a public calamity."

This was a direct challenge to labor. On December 3rd the Executive Committee of the Council assembled to discuss the question how to meet the challenge. Many speakers expressed themselves in favor of a new national strike. Information was quoted that the army was full of unrest, that the peasants were revolting, that the workingmen were firmly in favor of a general strike. No decision, however, was reached. The session of the Executive Committee was interrupted by the arrival of a detachment of soldiers. The Committee, and later the members of the Council, were imprisoned.

The Council had existed fifty days.

The government was now returning to its old methods with more recklessness and infinitely deeper cruelty. The

* That the "manifesto" touched a vital spot can be seen from the fact that the sums taken from the savings banks in December, 1905, were *96 millions of rubles more* than the average for the previous four years. This shows the extent of the Council's influence with the masses.

October promises were in abeyance. The reactionary press was clamoring for *action.* "How can we expect society to uphold the government," the *Novoye Vremya* asked, "when the government *does absolutely nothing,* when the conviction is growing that its inactivity is a conscientious, carefully planned method?"

The government arrested the representatives of the peasants and the representatives of the workingmen. It encouraged the Black Hundred. On December 1st the Tzar received delegations from three Black Hundred organizations, thus giving them his imperial sanction. Simultaneously the text of a circular sent to all local chiefs of police became known. In the circular the government ordered that "all leaders, instigators and heads of the political and agrarian anti-governmental movement, and all other persons figuring as delegates, should be identified and then arrested and imprisoned in local jails, to be treated later in accordance with advices from the Minister of the Interior."

The reactionary *Moskovskya Vedomosti* hailed "the return of firm authority."

The revolutionary forces were rapidly decreasing. This was due, primarily, to the fact that the army, notwithstanding numerous rebellions, remained faithful to the administration. It is possible and even probable that with an army recruited mainly from the ignorant peasants and stupefied by years of mute unreasoning obedience, the government in December, 1905, would have remained victorious under all circumstances. The victory, however, was made much easier by the dissensions and disagreements in the progressive ranks.

*The industrial world became disgusted with the revolution.* The manifesto of October 17th satisfied all its desires. The continuous strikes and disturbances were undermining industry and commerce. In the summer months of 1905 the manufacturers demanded that the government should pacify the strikes by political reforms.

In November and December, 1905, they were ready to uphold the government in suppressing the labor-movement by all means. They saw no end to the strikes, they saw no limit to the workingmen's demands. They had fought the movement for an eight-hour work-day and in most of the cases succeeded. They were ready now to fight all revolutionary manifestations, which for them meant anarchy, destruction of property, loss of profits, and mob rule. In November, the Moscow Chamber of Commerce telegraphed to Count Witte: "Be firm; bring to a successful end the establishment of the Imperial Duma on the basis of the October manifesto. Pay no heed to the demands of the extreme parties." Similar encouraging greetings were sent from many other merchants' and manufacturers' associations. Alexander Gutchkov, chairman of the Central Committee of the Octobrists party, declared the revolution was "a return to moral savagery, a spirit of anarchy. A victory of the revolution or even a recurrence of the revolutionary crisis would destroy both our new political liberty and the remnants of our wealth and culture."

The manufacturers and the financial world demanded peace, order, quiet. The fact that the political power remained in the hands of the old government was for them of no great importance. They preferred a firm government under Witte to a series of shocks under the Workmen's Council.

The liberals, united in the Constitutional Democratic Party, were not less in favor of peace and order. The Constitutional Democratic Party comprised many members of the Zemstvo opposition, the secret group "Emancipation" and a great number of the participants in the intellectual "Central Union." The Constitutional Democrats counted in their ranks men of high educational and cultural standing, of profound learning and of national reputation. They sincerely cherished the idea of freedom and actually hated the autocratic order. But they

were by no means interested in an eight-hour work-day or in similar demands put forward by the working masses. On the contrary, in so far as they were connected with the well-to-do urban classes, they began to be annoyed by the constant disorder, the endless strikes impeding production and transportation. In so far as they were connected with the land-owning nobility (many of the Zemstvo-liberals being land-owners themselves), they looked with apprehension on the rising tide of peasant revolts. They wanted political freedom and a monarchy on a constitutional basis, and the October manifesto in their opinion *was* a material victory. The only sound tactics after the October strike, they thought, were organization, peace, poise. The declaration of more and more general strikes, the call to arms, the numerous rebellions among soldiers, they thought detrimental to the cause of the revolution.

"*Two strike-committees*"—was the characterization of the two fighting camps in November-December, given by the leading thinker of liberal Russia, Peter Struve, who had just returned from exile. "One on the extreme left, the other on the extreme right; two enemies, twins, the revolutionary workingmen and the bureaucracy. Both strive to destroy each other, and both feed on each other. Both aim at dictatorship and make mutual agreement impossible." "It is my deep conviction," Struve wrote, "that once an actual and effective agreement as to program and tactics has been reached among the various classes and nationalities of Russia, *the bureaucracy will be overthrown* as by a single blow."

The underlying idea was that the old régime was going to pieces not because of *physical exhaustion,* but because it had lost its *moral prestige,* because it was decaying *from within;* it had been deserted by its best men, and was *psychologically* depressed at the sight of the *entire nation* opposing it. The *unanimity* of the national condemnation was, according to the Constitutional Demo-

crats, the cause of the administration's defeat. If now the elections to the Imperial Duma were to result in a unanimously progressive representation, they said, the autocratic order would automatically cease to exist. "If the guards of the bureaucracy are anxious to shoot, by all means let us confront them with the necessity of firing upon the Tauric Palace" (the Imperial Duma), Peter Struve wrote in his magazine, *The Polar Star*. "Then everything will be clear. The people need order, for only in order will they fully realize the incompatibility between themselves and the governing bureaucracy."

What would be the consequences if, in spite of a unanimous condemnation, the bureaucracy still remained in power? What would happen if, while the thinking people fully realized their incompatibility with the old régime, "the guards of bureaucracy" still controlled the machinery of government and were determined in their defiance? The Constitutional Democrats did not answer these questions. They still believed in the human qualities of the Russian administrators. Let them become convinced, they thought, that the country is unequivocally against them, and they will step aside. There was another, perhaps less clear assumption on the side of the Constitutional Democrats, namely that the revolution would compel the government to look for support among the moderate classes and call the liberal parties to power. "In order that the reforms proclaimed in the October manifesto should receive their adequate, i.e., their revolutionary, realization," the *Polar Star* wrote, "it is necessary that the governmental power should pass into the hands of a new class, that the bureaucracy should surrender its positions. Into whose hands could the power have been transferred? Only into the hands of the Zemstvo representatives and the "third element," who had been united in the "Emancipation." *

The Constitutional Democrats were not afraid of the

* Isgoyev in the *Polar Star*, February 18, 1906.

revolution as the Octobrists were. They were, perhaps, secretly pleased that a revolutionary menace existed. But they were Russian intellectuals inclined to substitute theory for facts. "In the beginning was the Word." Their belief in a word of the nation, *not backed by actual force,* made the Constitutional Democrats very bitter critics of the revolution.

Thus the progressive forces were split into warring factions.

The Zemstvos, the stronghold of liberalism, were now lost to the revolution. The apathetic backward gentry who had formerly allowed their progressive neighbors to take care of the Zemstvo affairs, were now shaken from their indolence by the peasant revolts. For them the revolution was not a struggle for ideas or principles of government; for them it meant ruin, destruction of their estates, devastation of their houses, if not personal injury and insult. The gentry flocked into the Zemstvos and in November and December, 1905, put an end to the progressive aspirations of the latter. Hosts of the "third element," physicians, statisticians, agriculturists, editors of Zemstvo publications, were discharged as supporters of the revolution. Many branches of the Zemstvo activities were discontinued. The liberal spirit was expelled. The Zemstvos began to declare their support of the administration.

The average city inhabitant of the middle class was simply tired of all these excitements and strikes. "Just think of it!" the *Novoye Vremya* wrote in November. "Just consider the meaning of all these resolutions of printers, bakers, plumbers, druggists, conductors, clerks, domestic servants and even physicians. There will come a time when, called to your child choking with diphtheria, a thousand physicians will only shrug their shoulders, not daring to lift a hand or to prescribe a medicine until the establishment of universal suffrage in Petersburg. There will come a time when millers will shut their mills until

freedom of the press is established, and the wood merchants will refuse to sell wood until they are elected to Parliament. Some fine morning you will have no rolls for your coffee, no water for washing because somewhere a political platform has clashed with another. The servants will refuse to shine your boots because in some God-forsaken town a captain of police has thrown a boot at his servant. Try and discharge a drunken chimney-sweeper, and the entire corporation of chimney-sweepers from Lapland to Ararat will go on strike."

These lines reflect the mood of the unrevolutionary middle class.

Towards the beginning of December the labor-movement was practically *alone in the field.* It was not free from mistakes, either. Its leaders were mainly intellectuals who had no perfect grasp of reality. The Council of Workmen Delegates believed that it held the leadership, but it was rather a tool in the hands of the masses, expressing their moods and wishes. The other revolutionary organizations, the Social-Democrats and Social-Revolutionists, had no clearer outlook as to the future. Besides, they lacked the great authority of the Council, though the influence of their ideas was extremely large. The Socialists, together with the Workmen's Council, overestimated the revolutionary power of the workingmen. There was a strong faction among the Socialists who even believed Russia could immediately introduce Socialism. The adherents of this idea argued that all other classes of Russia were feeble, unorganized, that the only strong active class was the proletariat and that in case of a victory over absolutism, the power must necessarily fall into the hands of labor, which, jointly with the revolutionary peasants, would not hesitate to declare the abolition of private property.* These ideas were earnestly defended in a backward country with undeveloped industry, with no habits of organization, at

* N. Trotzki, *Our Revolution,* pp. 245-75 passim.

a time when the workingmen were getting out of breath and the revolutionary onslaughts were undertaken in sheer despair.

The lack of foresight was natural. The leaders of the labor-movement had seen a tide of strikes rising higher and higher for a whole year. They had seen a magnificent change in the spirit of the masses manifesting itself in ever new revolutionary actions. They had seen the government beside itself for a while. And they believed the great struggle could be continued in the same spirit. They called for an armed insurrection. They were going to conduct it *alone*.

Their efforts were doomed to failure.

The great *national* movement of 1905, culminating in the *national* October strike, supported by *all* groups and political organizations for *various* reasons, was now at an end. The revolution was dead, though it still shook with violent convulsions.

# CHAPTER XV

## THE THIRD ACT: BURNING MOSCOW

THE revolutionary workingmen decided to wage with autocracy a last decisive battle.

The Petersburg Workmen's Committee, newly elected after the arrest of the Executive Committee on December 3rd, decided for a general strike. The Petersburg Union of railway employees joined. An appeal was issued to the nation. The Moscow Council of Workmen Delegates upheld the decision. A conference of representatives of twenty-nine railroad lines issued a call to strike. No special preparations were made. No central body to conduct the tremendous strike was in existence. No definite term for ending the strike was fixed. The *Bulletin* of the Workmen's Council held the view that the strike must turn into an armed revolution. "The Moscow Workmen's Council," it stated, "declared a general political strike to begin on Wednesday, December 7th; the aim is to transform it into an armed insurrection."

The revolution had no arms. The government was armed to the teeth. The revolution had no resources. The government was making vast preparations to meet the attack. Yet the decision of the labor-organizations was not entirely out of keeping with the situation, and the plan of a general insurrection was not utopian, as was proven by many developments of the December strike, especially in Moscow.

*In Moscow* there reigned a state of armed rebellion for more than a week. The people themselves, and not merely those affiliated with revolutionary organizations, erected hundreds of barricades, behind which the armed revolutionary groups offered resistance. Many houses

were turned into armed revolutionary posts; from the roofs of buildings bombs were thrown on the troops; from the windows of houses volleys were fired on the soldiers. In a few places detachments of soldiers were surrounded and disarmed; in many places the soldiers' attacks were beaten off. The huge city was a battlefield for many days and nights. The troops resorted to *artillery fire*. Machine-guns and cannon were continually fired along the streets. Houses giving protection to revolutionists were bombarded and set on fire. Whole city districts were shattered and destroyed by artillery shells. The number of citizens killed in the battles was 1,059, the number of soldiers thirty-five. As to the wounded, their number could not be ascertained, many citizens hiding their wounded for fear of arrests.

In many other cities and localities armed insurrections took place. In Nikolayev the city was for several days in the hands of an armed citizens' militia. In Novorossiysk the Workmen's Council was for a time the only organized power. In Pyatigorsk, a citizens' committee, encouraged by a neutral attitude of the local garrison, took possession of the governmental affairs; the police were discharged and disarmed; the troops willingly surrendered their arms to the people. An armed militia under the red flag protected peace and order. Similar developments took place in Georgievsk, Vladikavkaz, Kutaiss, Batum, Sochi and many other Caucasian cities. In the Donetz region, along the Ekaterininskaya railroad lines, the workingmen formed armed camps, barricaded the stations to impede the transportation of troops, and in some places besieged the soldiers' barracks, compelling them to surrender.

In Rostov-on-Don bloody fights between the revolutionists and the troops continued for several days. The revolutionists used dynamite and revolvers, the troops fired cannon and machine-guns. The battles were especially severe in one of the suburbs inhabited by working-

By N. Pirogov.

QUELLING THE MOSCOW REBELLION

men. Similar insurrections took place in Sormovo, Motovilicha and other towns. The Baltic province, where the Lettish working population in towns and on the farms was imbued with an unflinching revolutionary spirit, were turned into one great battlefield. Revolutionary insurrections in the cities were accompanied by revolutionary attacks on the landed estates and baronial castles of the local German aristocracy. The Letts proved to be a strongly organized and well-disciplined revolutionary army having numbers of skilful sharpshooters at its command. Numerous revolutionary upheavals took place along the Siberian railroad line.

As to the other regions of the country, the general December strike took on less violent forms. It was, however, quite successful. Only in Petersburg was the strike comparatively weak. In all the other industrial centers the working population readily responded to the call and stopped work. An overwhelming majority of the railway lines also went on strike.

In its scope, the December strike was perhaps not inferior to the October strike. In its outburst of revolutionary energy it was perhaps stronger. And yet, it was doomed to failure. *It lacked the spontaneity and novelty of the October strike. It lacked the support of all the other progressive groups. And it was faced by a government which had perfectly regained its self-assurance.*

The December strike was soon quelled everywhere by military force.

At the same time the peasant revolts were still going on in their usual unorganized way. In many instances the peasants showed signs of political understanding and an inclination towards concerted action. In the majority of cases, however, their dissatisfaction expressed itself in violent attacks on the landlords, in burning and robbing. During the fall of 1905, in nineteen provinces alone 2,000 landed estates were destroyed, their value amounting to 29 millions of rubles. The landlords

flocked from their country homes into the cities, cursing the revolutionary movement, urging the administration to act.

Then began the most atrocious chapter of the Russian revolution—the period of vengeance. The country was veiled in a bloody mist. The population was terrorized. Hatred, cruelty and thirst for revenge turned human beings into fiendish, uncanny beasts. The government had only one end in mind,—to punish its foes. The country being full of revolutionists and radicals, who after October 17th had everywhere acted openly, the work of punishment was enormous.

The government began a series of arrests. It imprisoned those who belonged to a revolutionary organization; it imprisoned those who had addressed meetings or led demonstrations in the "days of freedom" (October and November); it imprisoned the strike-committees and all those who attended conferences, conventions or councils of workingmen, of peasants, of professionals, of railroad employees; it imprisoned writers, reporters, editors of newspapers, preachers, soldiers, officers. It imprisoned every one whom it suspected of having given aid and comfort to its enemies. It filled all the prisons beyond their capacity; it sent tens of thousands to Siberia; it rented special houses to serve as prisons. It established courts-martial all over the country to try the most serious offenders, and the sentence was usually death, death, death.

One should not be astonished at the sight of these horrors. They were a natural outcome of a year of revolution. The administration and the army officers hated the revolutionists *as their personal enemies*. For a whole year every administrator, high or low, lived in constant fear of a revolutionary bullet. Scores of generals, chiefs of police, gendarmerie officers and other officials of rank were assassinated; thousands of police officers were attacked and murdered in the streets. Those who were

conspicuous in their support of the old régime were doomed to an almost certain death. And each death created a deeper fright among the friends and acquaintances, superiors and subordinates of the officer executed by the revolution.

There was another reason for the venomous hatred of the administrators. During October and November the power had slipped out of their hands. They, Russian Tchinovnicks as they were, bred in the belief that a social movement of any kind was a punishable "disturbance," had had to witness revolutionary crowds moving freely in the streets, stopping traffic, closing shops, opening prisons, organizing meetings, carrying red flags, sometimes disarming policemen. They had witnessed all these obnoxious activities and had had to keep quiet. This was quite intolerable. When the writer of these lines, who for a year had been hiding from the gendarmes under a false name and in disguise, brazenly walked in October, 1905, into the office of the gendarmerie officer in charge of his case, asking for his papers, the officer met him with a look full of unspeakable hatred; yet he quietly unlocked a safe and returned the demanded documents. The case was dismissed by the revolution. The officer was defeated, for a time. The system of detectives was disorganized. When, a few weeks later, the same officer was in charge of a new case against the same person, he did not forget the day of his humiliation.

This spirit of personal vengeance characterized the punitive actions of the administration after the December rebellions. The court-martial was prejudiced against the defendants. The administrative courts (if courts they could be called) did not care to distinguish between innocent and guilty. The system of imprisoning persons "pending the investigation of the causes of their arrest" again became prevalent. Between October, 1905, and April, 1906, the number of persons imprisoned or sent

to Siberia by order of the administration, in the majority of cases without any trial, amounted to *seventy thousand.** Nearly every morning a number of men, women and young boys were hanged. The number of executed became a regular news item in the papers.

More vicious even than the court-martial were the *punitive expeditions.* Those were army units sent under the command of a general or a colonel to punish the population of an entire district or a province or a city where the revolutionary outbursts or the peasant revolts had been strongest.

We have quoted above (p. 70) the order given by Colonel Mien to Colonel Rieman heading a punitive expedition to act along the Moscow-Kazan railroad line. The spirit of the expedition is expressed in the command "to make no prisoners and to act mercilessly." Colonel Rieman with his soldiers rode from station to station, killing the station-masters without trial, opening fire on casual onlookers who happened to be on the station platform, entering houses and killing peaceful citizens. Colonel Rieman was supposed to unearth and punish the armed rebels and strike-leaders. The latter, however, had had time to escape, and the horrors of cruel death were inflicted on innocent persons.

Here are a few scenes described by one who made a careful investigation of the expedition's bloody triumphs:

"Half a mile from the station Perovo, the soldier-train met on the side tracks a large number of peasants who were unloading what remained of the contents of a freight car. They paid little attention to the approaching train. True, they had been warned by the Perovo inhabitants that Cossacks were expected, but they did not believe it. Of what use could the Cossacks be now? The goods were nearly all removed; nobody had interfered from the beginning. Why should they care now when

* V. Obninski, *Half a Year of Russian Revolution,* p. 132. Quoted in *Social Movement,* Vol. II, Part II, p. 177.

nothing remained? The peasants had come from a distance of a hundred versts.

"Their good humor was dispelled by volleys from the windows of the slowly approaching train. The horses and many men fell, blood-stained, on the snow.

"The shooting was furious; the soldiers sprang out of the cars and scattered over the tracks, firing upon the fleeing peasants. A group of peasants rushed to the left of them, through an open space, hoping to reach the nearby woods. Their hope was vain. The bullets were quicker, and many remained on the spot. Only a few reached the woods and escaped death. The number of the dead was 53-57.

"When the expedition reached the station, Orlovski, the station-master's assistant, was on the platform. When he saw everybody driven away from the platform and the soldiers take possession of the apparatus, the signal devices and the management of the station, believing that there was nothing he could do, he went home to tell his wife that he was safe. He stayed at home about a quarter of an hour and returned to the station. He did not guess that those fifteen minutes were the last he would ever give to his wife. The next day his unfortunate widow received the mutilated, disfigured corpse of her husband.

"The body was disfigured to such a degree that had it not been for the clothes it could not have been recognized. The face had been stabbed all over by bayonets. The eye-sockets were pierced through to the brain. The chin, the cheeks and the nose were one bloody mask.

"It was when Orlovski was approaching the station, after he had climbed the stairs that Colonel Rieman ordered him to be shot. Several bullets penetrated his body. When he fell down, he was still alive. The rest was done by bayonets. The soldiers lifted him into a car, and it was not till the next morning that the station employees brought the body to the young widow.

"Having thus disposed of Orlovski, Rieman encoun-

tered on the station another assistant of the head-master, Larionov, who was on duty. Larionov was just returning from the side-tracks whither he had directed the soldiers' train. Rieman noticed his uniform and asked:

" ' Are you assistant Lorinov? '

" ' Yes.'

" ' Come into my room.'

" A few minutes later they came out of the room. In a loud voice the colonel gave the command:

" ' Follow me.'

" A few steps further on there stood four soldiers. It was near the little ladder. Rieman shouted fiercely:

" ' Bayonet him! '

" The first blow hit the backbone. Larionov fell to the ground in terrific agony, crying, begging for mercy. Other blows followed. When he was dead, Rieman, in order to be perfectly sure, fired a revolver into the dead body. Thus Larionov after his death was granted the mercy he begged for while alive: to be killed instantly in order to avoid the intolerable pain."

It was the same Colonel Rieman who, searching one of the houses in the presence of an old woman and her two young sons, drew a revolver and said to the woman:

" Step aside, grandma."

The woman refusing to do so, he pushed her aside with his left hand while with the right he fired a shot at her son, who fell dead to the ground. The boy was as innocent as any average Russian. He had nothing to do with the revolution except, perhaps, that he had expressed sympathy with the strikers.*

Colonel Rieman was no exception. The " punitive expeditions," subject to no control and exempt even from the laws of the autocratic government, behaved in Russia far worse than foreign conquerors are wont to behave in invaded countries. " To make no prisoners and to act

* V. Vladimirov, *The Punitive Expedition of the Semyonovski Regiment on the Moscow-Kazan Railroad Line,* pp. 17-34 passim.

Along the Route of the Punitive Expedition

mercilessly" was the common practice. General Bauer, head of a punitive expedition in one of the Caucasian districts, announced in his proclamation to the population: "Every violation of or a failure to comply with the orders will be followed by destruction and annihilation of entire villages, without discrimination between the innocent and the guilty." "If only a single rifle, dagger or other weapon is not handed over," the proclamation continues, "if only a single criminal is not surrendered, if one recruit fails to present himself in due time or one duty is not fulfilled, etc., troops will be sent into that village, not to punish or disarm the population, etc., but with the sole purpose of leveling the village with the ground." General Rennenkampf, head of a punitive expedition on the Siberian railroad line, announced to the population: "In case of any attempt on the life of those belonging to my suite, the gendarmes or the railroad guards, all the prisoners and all those previously sent to jail will be seized as hostages and put to death an hour after the attempt." *

These proclamations were not mere threats. The history of the winter and summer of 1906 and many following months is a chronicle of the promiscuous shooting and killing of men and women without any trace of legal procedure. After the arrival of a punitive expedition at its place of destination, the local secret police handed the head of the expedition a list of "suspects." The "suspects" were immediately arrested, part of them being sent to the nearest prison, while the more "dangerous characters" were separated, taken out of town, and shot. In addition, heavy indemnities were imposed on the local population.

In an interpellation to the government, presented in the Duma by the Social-Democratic faction on May 2, 1908, the following facts are quoted: "Between the mid-

* E. Mayevski, "General Outline of the Movement," 1904-07, in *Social Movement,* Vol. II, Part I, p. 176.

dle of December, 1905, and the first of June, 1906, according to data that are far from complete, the punitive expeditions under Generals Orlov, Bezobrazov, Vershinin, Wendt, Solonina and others in the Lettish districts of the Baltic provinces alone shot, hanged and otherwise killed, without trial and without any provocation, 1,170 peasants, farmers and their journeymen, and burned over 300 peasants' estates, together with personal property estimated at 2,000,000 of rubles, not counting damages caused by requisition, robberies and other unlawful actions of the punitive expeditions and the administration. The number of those punished with whips and rods could not be ascertained; it exceeded, however, several times the number of killed."

The punitive expeditions presented a picture of terrors infrequent even in war time. The population of the district covered by the punitive expedition was entirely in the hands of the commanding officer and the soldiery. The soldiers were usually stationed in the houses of the peasants, who were obliged to accommodate them. This meant additional humiliation and injury to the population. The violation of women was a continual feature of the expeditions. "Official documents record a long series of facts which make the darkest pages of the history of colonial wars look less atrocious. Every woman who was incautious enough to fall into the hands of the soldiers was subject to violation, neither age nor sickness being able to protect her. Cases are quoted where little girls and feeble old women, pregnant and paralytic women were outraged. Many details are of such a character that the psychic normality of those committing the acts are under question." *

The revolutionists, practically all those opposed to the old régime, were declared outlaws. A Russian jurist of moderate political views, V. A. Maklakov, could find no other name than murder for the executions of

* V. Obninski, *The New Order,* Vol. I, p. 94.

revolutionists by court-martial and punitive expeditions. "I call those executions murder," he wrote, "and this is not rhetoric. Let the common language call them executions, for the jurist they are murder. Execution differs from simple murder not by its arm but by its form. No motives of national or social necessity can turn murder into legal execution." *

Among the "executed" were often boys of sixteen or seventeen, who, swept by the current, had committed revolutionary acts. Later, the number of "expropriations," i.e., armed attacks on private citizens, offices and banks, undertaken by private groups or individuals under the disguise of revolutionary factions, in reality pursuing the aim of robbery for private interests, increased enormously. The government treated all those "expropriators" as revolutionists and terrorists, which in the majority of the cases meant death.

The Black Hundred was now free to act at will. The leaders of the Black Hundred criticized governors and judges, appealed to the Tzar for drastic measures against the revolutionists, and staged pogroms or attacks on "undesirable" individuals. As was revealed later, many of the proclamations spread by the Black Hundred were printed in the Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior under supervision of a specially assigned gendarmerie officer. Here are excerpts from one of them: "Can we tolerate it any more, that the revolutionists are in power in Petersburg and do not allow our Tzar to make public the liberties he has granted? Recently those outcasts of humanity, the Social-Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionists, even succeeded in wounding our Tzar, the little father, whose hair has become gray from sorrow. Therefore, great Russian people, arise, wake up, form bands, arm yourselves with firearms, scythes, pitchforks and rush to the defense of our Tzar, our Fatherland and the Orthodox Church."

* *Law*, 1905, No. 42.

The " scythes " and " pitchforks " were only a figure of speech. The Black Hundred organizations were provided by the administration with a sufficient number of revolvers to be able to attack successfully the " red flag scoundrels " and the intellectuals in general. The local administrators made it their duty to protect the Black Hundred. They were compelled to do so, on pain of being removed from their positions as " politically unreliable " characters. The co-operation of the local authorities and the local pogrom-makers became a permanent feature of the years to come. When in Odessa a deputation complained to General Kaulbars of the vicious actions of the " Union of Russian People," the general frankly replied that he was going to aid the Union, and that he would see to it that new branches were opened. Were any member of the Union attacked, he added, he would flood Odessa with blood.

The country groaned. The reign of terror drove the popular organizations back " underground " or destroyed them entirely. Meetings became less frequent, in many places disappearing entirely. The press was strangled. The labor unions were shattered. The " unions " of professionals were dead. The great hopes were broken. The fighting spirit decreased from day to day. Despair crept into the heart of many a brave fighter. From the Great Revolution nothing seemed to remain but scaffolds at dawn and prisons full of victims.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE FOURTH ACT: THE IMPERIAL DUMA

YET something immensely valuable remained after the Great Upheaval. There remained the *legally recognized civic freedom,* and a *legally recognized constitutional order embodied in the institution of the Imperial Duma.*

The civic freedom was only a claim. The government tried to erase the very memory of the October manifesto. It went so far as to suppress newspapers for commenting on the manifesto. On the eve of the anniversary of October 17th, a Russian administrator, the Governor of Tiflis, made it known through placards that "no meetings, manifestations or processions on October 17th would be tolerated; that gatherings of all sorts would be dispersed by military force and that participants in such gatherings, not annihilated by the troops, would be arrested and tried by field court-martial." Personal inviolability and all the other liberal principles that had been declared in the manifesto, sounded like a mockery amid the din of shooting and the devastations of the punitive expeditions. Yet these principles *had* been declared. The government did not repeal them, did not dare to repeal them. The country felt the actions of the administration as *unlawful.* One could silence the dissatisfied; one could frighten political adversaries, but one could not make the citizen believe that the victorious government was right.

Nor was it possible entirely to annihilate the achievements of the "days of freedom." The press was laboring under a severe pressure, yet no power in the world could force the writers to return to the humble tone of

the pre-revolutionary period. Political organizations of a radical character were under ban, yet the masses of the population grew to know them and to affiliate themselves with one or the other in times of election. The calling of political meetings or conventions was forbidden, except for the "loyal" organizations, yet the old methods of "underground" activity were now psychologically impossible; the people had learned to appreciate *open* political campaigns, and seized every opportunity to appear "legally" in the open air of public life. Professional and labor unions were treated like so many nests of conspiracy and sedition, yet the impulse to unite was so intense and the advantages of organization so manifest that the return to the state of "human dust" was now utopian. The whole attitude of the country towards political liberty had changed. The people *knew* now that they had a right to be free, that they had won their right in fierce struggles. Even the peasants, ignorant and primitive as most of them had been, had changed considerably under the influence of the revolution. The average peasant began to think politically, to question, to draw conclusions. The peasants of 1906 were far more advanced politically than they had been at the beginning of their movements. Many of them were now capable of organization, of concerted action. Many had become readers of the press and adherents of radical political parties.

The revolution was defeated, yet civic freedom lived in the minds and in the attitude of the people. The revolution was dead, yet the institution of the Duma survived as a political reality of great organizing power. The government was utterly unfitted to co-operate with a political representation of the people. In fact, it was planning to ignore the Duma entirely or to curb it. Yet it had not the courage to abandon representation entirely. Legally, "no law could become binding without the consent of the Imperial Duma," and the latter had a right

to control the unlawful actions of the administration. This was the great inheritance of the great movement.

The Duma had to stay.

The first elections passed under a double pressure: from the government and the Socialist parties. The government saw in the Duma a stronghold of the revolution. The Socialist parties saw in it a compromise with the autocratic order. Firmly convinced that a new great upheaval was impending, the extreme parties considered participation in the Duma a surrender, a resignation of revolutionary ideas. They, therefore, conducted a strong agitation in favor of boycotting the Duma.

It was, perhaps, due to this agitation that the government did not suppress the other progressive parties participating in the election campaign, as severely as it did later. The Constitutional Democrats and other progressive factions were strenuously opposed to the attitude of the extremists. The Constitutional Democrats saw in a unanimously progressive Duma the most effective weapon against the autocratic order. The policy of boycotting the Duma they thought suicidal for the revolution. They mobilized all their forces to conduct a vigorous campaign.

The government, in its turn, mobilized the Black Hundred and other "dark forces" to help to elect candidates pledged to the existing order. The machinery of the administration was entirely at their disposal. The government still cherished a hope that the majority of the Duma, particularly the representatives of the backward peasants, would be loyal to the administration. The suffrage was by no means universal. The population was divided into groups according to property and occupation: nobility, peasants, wealthy inhabitants of the cities, poorer inhabitants of the cities, the latter group comprising all propertyless citizens who could afford to rent a flat. The factory workingmen formed a special group. Each group in each province elected a certain number of

province electors, who, in their totality, formed the provincial electoral body to elect from among themselves representatives to the Duma. The number of electors alloted to each group was arbitrarily fixed without any relation to the number of the voters in the group: Thus, the workingmen received very few electors, while to the landlords and the peasants were secured a very large number. The government hoped that the combined electorate of the landlords and the peasants would secure reactionary candidates in many parts of the country.

The returns surprised the most optimistic expectations. The overwhelming majority of the Duma was outspokenly of the opposition. The party affiliations of the deputies were: 178 Constitutional Democrats, 116 semi-Socialist representatives of the peasantry who in the Duma formed the "Labor faction," 63 "Autonomists," —liberal representatives of the border provinces, a score or more of Socialists, and only *28* supporters of the administration.

Liberal Russia hailed the results of the election. The day fixed for the opening of the Duma, April 27, 1906, was welcomed as the greatest in Russian history. The country had spoken. The government would be compelled to yield to the voice of the nation.

Yet, there was something pathetic in the situation of the Duma. A few days *before* April 27th, the government published the new fundamental laws of the state, the Constitution of Russia, including the representative bodies of the Duma and the Imperial Council (upper chamber). This offered plain evidence that the government *did not intend to co-operate with the Duma* in the most vital problems. The grip of terror did not slacken even on the day of the opening of the Duma. The army of the revolution created the Duma and carried it to the front, leaving the representatives face to face with the

enemy, while the main forces retreated and disappeared. The Duma existed, but without power to make its will effective.

There was something symbolic about the very building assigned for the Duma. This was the old Tauric Palace, for generations inhabited by favorites of the Tzars and Tzarinas, breathing the spirit of the Russian bureaucracy and full of its traditions. For many years before 1906 the palace had been deserted. The main hall had to be reconstructed. When the author of this work, then a press representative, visited the building on April 26th, the carpenters were not yet ready, the benches were still unpolished, and the building was full of dust. Little comfort was provided for the representatives of the nation; police vigilance, on the other hand, was more than abundant. On the day the Duma was to open its session, batteries of artillery passed in front of the Tauric Palace. It may have been a mere accident, but it was significant.

Street demonstrations were attempted in Petersburg to greet the opening of the Duma. I was among the people, listening, observing. There was gloom in the expression of the crowds. The Cossacks were on guard. The troops were mobilized. Every gathering in the streets was quickly dispersed. "Don't stop! Don't stop!" was the rigid warning of mounted policemen cutting with their horses into the crowds on the sidewalks. Nobody resisted. People took care that the historic day should not be marked by arrests or bloodshed. But there was a sadness and a grim smile of despair on their faces. The Russian Parliament was opening under Cossack-rule! The representatives were first given a formal reception by the Tzar in his palace; then they proceeded to the Duma building. On their way, political prisoners waved handkerchiefs from jail-windows, and passers-by gathered in groups shouting: "Amnesty! Amnesty!" After they had entered the Tauric Palace and elected Professor

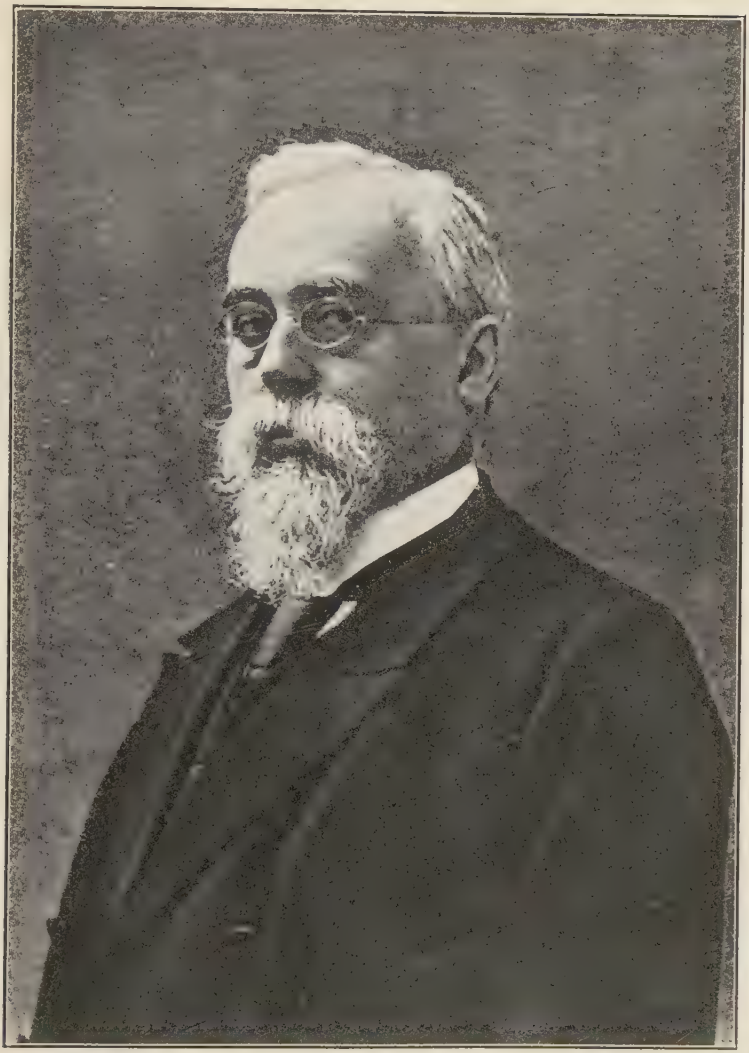
Muromtzev speaker, M. Petrunkevitch asked the floor for the first speech in the first Duma. He said:

"The duty of honor, the duty of our conscience, demands that our first thought, our first free word should be devoted to those who have sacrificed their freedom to free our dear Fatherland (tremendous applause). All the prisons of our country are full (long applause), thousands of hands are being stretched to us in hope and supplication, and I think that the duty of our conscience compels us to use all the influence our position gives us to see that the freedom that Russia has won costs no more sacrifices (long-drawn applause). We ask for peace and harmony. I think, gentlemen, that, although we cannot at present take up this question, as we are going to touch upon it in our response to the Emperor's Speech, we cannot refrain just now from expressing our deepest feelings, the cry of our heart,—that free Russia demands the liberation of all prisoners."

The audience rose to its feet and shouted almost in a chorus: "Amnesty! Amnesty!"

The government paid no heed. The government was far from sharing a program of "peace and harmony."

The first step of the Duma was to adopt the text of an address in response to the Emperor's Speech. The address, adopted almost unanimously, was a clear and able expression of all the vital demands of the revolution, stated in moderate but firm and dignified language. The Duma protested against "the infamy of executions without trial, pogroms, bombardments, imprisonment." The Duma declared that no peace was possible until the authorities stopped "committing violence under the protection of the name of his Imperial Majesty" and the ministers became responsible to the Duma. The Duma demanded the abolition of martial law and other extraordinary measures, the abolition of the aristocratic Imperial Council, the establishment of religious freedom, freedom of speech and press, freedom of unions, assemblage and



S. A. Muromtzev
Speaker of the First Duma

strikes and the right of petitions; the abolition of all restrictions and privileges as to class, nationality, religion or sex; and the abolition of capital punishment. As to the agrarian question, the Duma proposed that the peasants should be provided with additional land by the appropriation for this purpose of the land of the crown, the royal family and the churches and monasteries and by the "compulsory confiscation of private lands." The address contained a list of other reforms concerning local self-government and the rights of the non-Russian nationalities within the Empire, and ended with the following paragraph:

"There are demands made by the national conscience that cannot be refused, that cannot be delayed. Sire! The Duma expects from you political amnesty as the first token of mutual understanding and harmony between the Tzar and the people."

The address enraged the administration. The reactionary press attacked it venomously as a conspiracy of uplifters. The committee appointed by the Duma to hand the address to the Tzar was not received.

The open clash came on May 12th when Prime Minister Goremykin made his program speech in the Duma. The writer of these lines was fortunate enough to be in the Duma on this great day. Great it was because, for the first time in Russian history, the people and the autocracy met face to face, the people expressing their contempt for a system of lawlessness and oppression, the autocracy compelled to listen to their indignant voice. Briefly, the meaning of Goremykin's long speech was that the government was going to grant no reforms. The unanimous opinion of the Duma orators was that nothing short of a sincere realization of the October manifesto would pacify the country.

May 12th showed that the government was far from wishing "peace and harmony." It made clear that it would acquiesce in a Duma forming an integral part of

the bureaucratic machinery, but that it would never recognize a Duma acting as a powerful and independent branch of the government. The first bill introduced in the Duma by the government was an appropriation bill for the construction of a laundry in the hothouses of the Imperial University at Dorpat. The bureaucratic machinery was not going to change its course in the slightest degree. In the opinion of the administration, the Duma had to put its stamp on any measure worked out in the various ministries, not attempting to do legislative work by itself.

The Duma could not accept this view. The Duma was not indeed extreme. The Socialist parties had very little influence in the Tauric Palace, though a Social-Democratic faction was formed by a score of Socialist members. The leading party was the Constitutional Democrats, who preserved a calm and statesmanlike attitude in the most strange situations. The Duma desired to keep within lawful limits. Yet, it could not confine itself to putting its stamp on petty administrative bills while the country was suffering under an unheard of strain. The Duma proceeded to frame bills for the most urgent reforms. The new body proved to be very efficient. The Constitutional Party included a splendid collection of historians, writers, jurists, experts in public law and administrative problems. In a short time the Duma passed a number of bills of the most vital importance: agrarian reform; personal inviolability; religious freedom; equality of all citizens before the law; abolition of capital punishment; freedom of assemblage, of associations and strikes; reform of the courts; aid for the peasants suffering from bad crops, etc. All this it did in seventy-two days.

Not one of the bills passed the Imperial Council (of which the membership was half appointed by the crown and half elected by the wealthiest classes). None received the approval of the administration.

The situation became more strained day after day.

The Duma voted several interpellations on the most strikingly lawless acts of the administration. They were either ignored or answered in an arrogant manner. "Organized public opinion," the great weapon of the Constitutional Democrats, was as clear and pronounced as any one could hope. Yet it had little effect with the "Russian Germans," as Hertzen called them. Arrests and executions did not stop. Political activities were under ban. Not even the speeches of the Duma representatives could be freely reproduced by the provincial press. Several house-searchings occurred in the homes of the members of the Duma. The reactionary press soon demanded that the "revolutionary meeting" should be dissolved.

On June 1st a terrific pogrom took place in Byalostock, where more than eighty men, women and children were killed, scores of women outraged and entire portions of the city devastated. The Duma sent a special committee to investigate the causes of the pogrom. The writer of these lines went to Byalostock and was present at the hearings of the committee, which left no doubt that the pogrom had been staged by the administration. The committee reported that the soldiers of the garrison had been told in advance of the appointed day and that many officers had participated in the looting. Prince Urusoff, a member of the Duma and a former assistant to the Minister of the Interior, rose in the house to make his startling revelations about the printing of pogrom-proclamations in the offices of the Police Department. The government flatly denied the facts. The *Novoye Vremya* wrote that the Jewish revolutionists themselves were installing pogroms on their co-religionists in order to put blame on the administration. But the pogrom and the following revelations made a stupendous impression all over the country. It was evident that the pogrom was intended as an answer to the demands of the Duma. After this, when members of the Cabinet appeared in

the Duma, the deputies, including the sedate Constitutional Democratic professors, greeted them with shouts: "Pogrom-makers! Murderers! Get out of here!"

The Duma was powerless to stop lawless acts. It could only appeal to the country, enlighten the people as to the dangers of autocratic rulers, and uphold before them an example of government for the people by the people. This it did in the most convincing way through the speeches of the deputies and a special communication to the peasants on the agrarian projects of the Duma commission. And this made it short-lived.

The days of the Duma were seventy-two. It opened on April 27th, it was dissolved on July 9th. The dissolution came suddenly, without warning. The Tzar's manifesto declaring the closing of the Duma accused the representatives of "plunging into realms outside their jurisdiction," of "investigating the actions of local authorities appointed by the Emperor," of "finding imperfections in the fundamental laws which can be altered only by the Monarch's will," and of the "overtly lawless act of appealing to the people." The manifesto declared that because the peasants had lost hope of an amelioration of their conditions through the Duma, they had resorted to violence and disobedience to the authorities.

Thus the government condemned the Duma for failing to do the very thing it was prevented from doing.

The day of the dissolution was a Sunday. The representatives were absent from the Tauric Palace. When they returned on Monday morning they found the palace occupied by detachments of soldiers. Nobody was admitted into the building except the speaker and his secretaries.

The shock was tremendous. The deputies, however, offered no resistance. They were even afraid to convene in Petersburg for their last session. They did not think of putting themselves under the protection of the people and continuing the struggle. This would have meant

Pogrom

open rebellion against the authorities, which was not in keeping with the tone of the Constitutional Democratic Party. The deputies, however, went to Vyborg, Finland, where they were quite safe from the police, and adopted an appeal to the people to pay no taxes and give no recruits to the autocratic administration.

Thus the adherents of "organizing public opinion" repeated the action of the Council of Workmen Delegates whose policies they had so severely criticized. If carried out, the Vyborg appeal would have meant more than a revolution with folded arms. Refusing to pay taxes or deliver recruits would necessarily have led to clashes with authorities, to disorder and mutinies. The Vyborg appeal *was* an appeal to revolution, although the authors of the appeal did not think of heading a revolutionary movement themselves. They signed their call to the nation and adjourned. Thenceforward they were under police surveillance and later they were tried for sedition and put into jail.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE FIFTH ACT: COUP D'ÉTAT

THE country received the news of the dissolution of the Duma in comparative silence. The Vyborg appeal found no response among the people, who hardly knew of its existence. After the Duma had been silenced, the administrative grip over the press tightened immensely. Only a few newspapers reproduced the appeal. The Duma itself did nothing to let the people know of its decision.

The country was gloomy. Meetings were held in many cities and villages, but most of them were dispersed by armed force. In many instances the meetings were fired upon; in several cities the revolutionists offered armed resistance. In the city of Krementchug the Governor-General ordered a meeting on the Dnyepr Islands shelled. There was, however, no broad mass-movement, as many, including the government, had expected. In the rural communities the dissolution of the Duma aroused great amazement. The people could not believe that the Tzar had dismissed their envoys. The ex-representatives had to repeat the news over and over again and to give elaborate explanations before the peasants were able really to grasp the situation. About a hundred special messengers, authorized by various rural communities, came to Petersburg to ascertain whether the newspapers' report on the closing of the Duma was true. Thus, the act of July 9th was, perhaps, one of the most important political lessons for the peasant population, many of whom had still believed in the unity of the Tzar with his people. The more enlightened classes met the dissolution of the Duma with open indignation.

The government was on its guard. A circular was sent

to the local authorities ordering the arrest of any ex-members of the Duma who might try to conduct political propaganda. The vigilance of the police increased. The arrests became more frequent than before. Domiciliary visits assumed the character of an epidemic. Young and old, women and children, radicals and moderate citizens were sent to Siberia. Outrages within the prison walls, the torture of convicts, flogging and killing of prisoners became an every-day occurrence. The measures of the administration were now more formidable than the revolutionary movement. In the latter, many agents provocateurs, representatives of the secret police within the revolutionary organizations, played a considerable rôle. Many terroristic acts, many attempts on the lives of high officials were planned and carried out by the agents provocateurs. The administrators *needed* revolutionary acts which gave them an opportunity to show efficiency and devotion. Where such acts failed to occur, they had to be staged by secret agents.

During the summer the army began to show new signs of unrest. Mutinies occurred in more than 120 army-units. Even the soldiers of the Tzar's bodyguard held meetings and demanded an improvement of their conditions. On July 17th the navy crews of the fortress Sveaborg in Finland started an open revolt; they took possession of the fortress and fought a regular battle against the loyal battleships stationed in the harbor. On July 20th the fortress of Kronstadt revolted, many officers, including one admiral, being wounded. Part of the crew on the battle-cruiser "Pamyat Azova" revolted on the same day. On July 21st the soldiers of the Samurski regiment in the Caucasus assassinated many of their officers, including the commander of the regiment, and began to distribute rifles among the population, calling them to uphold "the Tzar and the Duma." It can hardly be asserted, however, that those mutinies were due to the dissolution of the Duma. The mutinies were unpleasant

to the government, but it now felt its strength: for though everybody hated it, nobody offered serious resistance. Stolypin, the new Prime Minister, was the man of the hour, and he ruled with an iron hand. His was the bold statement that "national expediency was above law." In the summer of 1906 *field court-martial* was established in all the provinces of Russia. The procedure of those courts was simpler than the procedure of the regular court-martial. No appeal was granted. No defense was possible. In the first three months of their existence the new courts executed 465 revolutionists, 56 of them without trial at all. The reign of terror was becoming fiercer every day. The country was silent at last. Gray twilight again spread over Russia, the gloom illuminated only by rifle-fire and the torches of the hangmen before dawn, the silence interrupted only by the wild yelling of the Black Hundred and the "black" reactionary press.

The second Duma was to convene on February 20, 1907. Between the closing of the first Duma and the opening of the second, the government had a free hand to legislate without check. Minister Stolypin undertook the greatest piece of economic legislation in the recent history of Russia. He abandoned the communal ownership of land in rural Russia. The law of November 6, 1906, gave a right to every individual member of the village community to have his share of land cut off from the land of the community and to dispose of it as his private property. Thus one of the fundamental institutions of Russia, considered the most genuine feature of Russian economic life, was abandoned by a mere administrative order. Necessary as the reform was for the economic development of the country, the motives underlying its introduction were purely political. The village community had proven dangerous to the bureaucratic order. The representatives of the peasantry in the Duma, the few conservatives not excluded, had been too much imbued with the idea that the land was "God's and the people's."

The reform was intended to destroy the very foundation of such ideas. Besides, it was looked upon as a means of hastening economic differentiation in the village. The stronger peasants readily made use of the reform to free themselves from the bonds of communal ownership of land; the weaker peasants obtained a legal permission to sell their shares of land. Thus the stronger became more strong, the weaker more weak. At one extreme of village life there developed a class of well-to-do farmers possessing comparatively large estates; on the other extreme a class of propertyless proletarians. The latter were, perhaps, more dangerous politically than the members of the village community had been. But, on the other hand, the well-to-do farmers were a great gain for the administration. Stolypin expressly said that he was going to support the strong peasants against the weak. The strong peasants, he thought, would be hostile to any disturbances of peace and order.

The new law was hastily put into operation. Boards of land-settlement were immediately established. The work of cutting the community land into individual portions soon began. It was planned that after the second Duma convened, it should find an accomplished fact which could not be undone. The plan did not fail. The Duma was afterwards compelled to give its consent to a law which had already brought deep changes in the economic structure of the village.

During the recess between the first and second Duma the semi-official reactionary press urged the government to change the electoral laws in favor of the wealthy classes. The provincial councils of the nobility and a number of Zemstovs, now reactionary and full of fighting spirit, sent petitions on behalf of electoral changes. The first Duma, they declared, was one-sided, not expressing the wishes of the people. Only a representation of wealth and culture could secure useful legislation.

This time the government did not change the electoral

law formally. The Senate, however, having in Russia the functions of a supreme court, set to work on the interpretation of the law. In a short time it "interpreted away" large groups of citizens supposed to be radical. The local authorities gave their own interpretations to the interpretations of the Senate. The elections took place under open pressure of the administration. Popular candidates were arrested, election committees prosecuted, party leaflets confiscated, election meetings forbidden. Party agitators were attacked by members of the Black Hundred, if not arrested by the police. The clergy did its bit to secure the election of "good" candidates. The entire machinery of the administration was keyed up to the requirements of the elections.

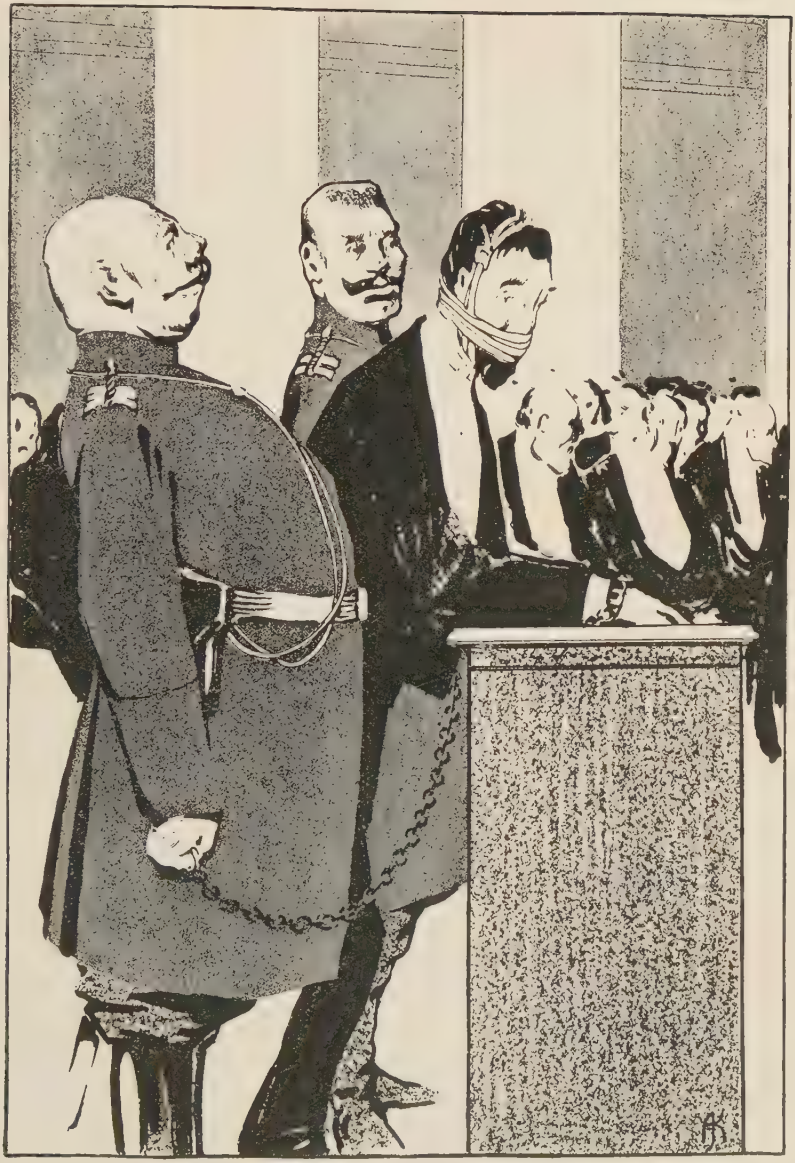
The returns were more surprising than in 1906.

There were elected 117 Constitutional Democrats, 97 members of the peasants' Labor Group, 83 Social-Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionists (the Socialists now participating in the elections), 39 Polish deputies, 34 Octobrists, and 63 reactionaries. Out of the 455 representatives the government could hardly muster one hundred (including the Octobrists). The presence of a large number of Socialists made the second Duma even more odious in the eyes of the administration than the first had been.

The second Duma lived one hundred days.

It was a gloomy assemblage. The beautiful hopes that had illuminated the hearts of so many before the opening of the first Duma had faded away. Concessions on the part of the government were less probable than ever. The voters had very little confidence in the new legislative body. It was powerless, and everybody knew it. It was practically alone, with no mass movements to back it. The country was silent. The only work that was left to the Duma was to criticize the government and agitate for a constitutional order.

The speeches in the second Duma were more bitter and



INTERPELLATION IN THE IMPERIAL DUMA
As seen by a cartoonist

full of hatred than in the first. This was in a measure due to the provocation of the bureaucracy. Prime Minister Stolypin talked to the Duma in a haughty tone. He declared that "the Duma was not granted the right to express disapproval, reproach, or mistrust of the government." He forbade the Duma commissions to invite experts to their sessions or to communicate with the Zemstovs or municipal councils. Petty attacks on the persons of the deputies added to the bitterness. On the other hand, the presence of a few score of reactionaries, among them members of the Black Hundred, who used the language of the slums, heated the atmosphere still more. The second Duma devoted less time to framing bills and more to interpellations, which were not always answered. And all the time it felt like a gay party on top of a volcano. Bad omens were not lacking. One day the ceiling of the main Duma-hall fell down, covering the left section of the benches. Fortunately, the accident happened when the hall was vacant. Had it happened a few hours sooner or later, the entire opposition would have been buried under the débris. The old bureaucratic palace seemed to resent the presence of representatives of the people.

The bureaucracy was already planning to dissolve the Duma. A plot was arranged. Agents provocateurs, among them the notorious Azev, provided the government with evidence that the Social-Democratic faction of the Duma was organizing a rebellion of the troops. The government demanded that all Social-Democrats should be excluded from the Duma sessions and that sixteen should be extradited to the authorities for the purpose of imprisonment. Before the Duma had time to pass on this request, it was dissolved by an order of the Tzar, on June 3, 1907.

On the same day a new electoral law, decreasing the representation of the workingmen, the peasants and the poorer classes of the urban population and increasing the

representation of the landlords and the wealthy industrial classes, was made public. The new law had not been discussed or voted in the Duma or in the Imperial Council. It was published as an order of the administration in blunt violation of the constitution. It was a coup d'état, but it secured a third Duma obedient to the bureaucracy.

The Social-Democratic faction of the second Duma were arrested, tried for high treason and sentenced to years of hard labor and subsequent exile to Siberia.

The country received the coup d'état in silence. Only church bells rang in many cities by order of "patriotic" administrators, and the councils of the nobility responded with patriotic addresses. The address of the Moscow nobility may be quoted as typical:

"Great Monarch," the Moscow nobility wrote, "in the days of grave ordeals, through which the Russian Fatherland has passed more than once, the ancient class of nobles, together with all the men of Russian spirit, have for centuries manifested by word and action their faith in the creative force of the full and undivided autocratic power of the Tzars. This faith remains unshaken among the nobles of Moscow. Now, as in former years, there is no political power in Russia equal to the power of the Tzar. The Tzar is the only representative of His people, the imperial voice of its conscience. He alone is the supreme ruler of its destinies, responsible only before God. The ancient power of the Tzar is higher in the minds of the people than passing external laws. The word of the Tzar instills life in the dead letter of the law. In this belief the nobles of Moscow joyfully greet your imperial decision manifested in the act of June 3d."

It was the old doctrine: "One God in heaven, one Tzar on earth," and all power is vested in the Tzar.

The nobles, the large landlords were satisfied. Capital, industry and commerce were appeased and partly won for the government by the promise of peace and order and

by the prospect of influence in the Duma. Labor was curbed. The peasantry was cut to pieces by the law of November 6th; the more prosperous were encouraged, the poorer were terrorized and silenced. The intellectuals, disappointed in revolutionary ideas, turned partly to theosophy, partly to the pursuit of personal success, partly to dark and morbid moods. The revolution was beaten. The revolutionary organizations were destroyed. Over the débris of the great movements a shadow remained,—the Imperial Duma, a mere plaything in the hands of the administration. Legally a constitutional monarchy, Russia was in reality an autocratic state.

Such was the situation from 1907 to 1917.

# PART III

# FIGHTERS AND DREAMERS

In the following two parts of this work we shall turn our attention from the general to the particular, from the history of movements to the history of men. We do not mean biographies of revolutionary or autocratic leaders: there were no leaders in the 1905–06 upheaval. The great drama knew no remarkable figures of nation-wide import. In the camp of autocracy the only conspicuous personality was, perhaps, Stolypin; this able political fighter, however, stepped to the front *at the end* of the drama, when the revolution lay defeated and it remained only for the victorious government to annihilate its remnants. In the camp of the revolutionary masses there were no leaders. The masses were led to the battle-line not by strong individuals impressing the people by force of mind or vigor of passion, but by impersonal secret committees. The peasants, in the majority of cases, acted under no leadership whatever. The clashes, one may fairly say, were mostly impersonal. Both the revolutionary forces and the machinery of the government acted with blind elemental power. The masses hated the old régime, but their hatred was directed against *a system,* not against an individual ruler; the administrators showed much persistence in suppressing the revolution, but their measures were aimed at a *collective* opponent. Thus the historian of the revolution is seldom given an opportunity to sketch the life of a great revolutionary leader. If, therefore, we endeavor to tell the "history of men," we mean by this the *human material,* the *human experiences* of the revolution. Dissolved into its component parts, the revolution appears to be a series of actions of individual men and women animated by a certain desire or idea. These individual men and women, their characters, their education, their ideas and beliefs, their relations to the revolution, are what the student of the revolution has

to look into if he wishes to reach a clear understanding of the gigantic struggle.

In this work of reviewing the human material of a historic epoch, as in all sociological studies, generalizations are indispensable. We cannot throw light on the mental process of *all* the peasants or all the intellectuals participating in the revolution. If we could, it would be unnecessary. What is required is a comprehensive picture of *social types,* of *generalized characters,* bearing collective features. These types, abstract as they may be, are a step forward from the term "social group" to living, suffering and acting human beings.

Russian literature is an inexhaustible source of material for the characterization of such types. Deprived of freedom to develop in all directions, the Russian genius concentrated itself on literature, making it infinitely more than "reading matter," elevating it to the height of a national sanctuary. With untiring vigilance the Russian writer followed every change in the public sentiment, every turn of the public trend of mind. With infinite care and ardor born out of love, he described the "people," the poor masses, their habits, their surroundings, their struggles, their joys and sorrows. And all the time, through all the historic developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was the ideal of *social justice,* of liberty for the oppressed, of plenty for the deprived, that illuminated the path of Russian "belle lettres."

"The Russian intellectual and the reflection of the best qualities of his spirit—Russian literature—can never see real happiness outside of social life and social heroism," says one of the great historians of Russian literature, S. Vengerov. "As a matter of fact, the Russian intellectual never looks for individual satisfaction; he strongly repudiates it when it is not connected with the happiness of others. *Not I, not I, not I* is the ever-recurring refrain of modern Russian literature throughout its history." *

* S. A. Vengerov, *Works,* Vol. I, pp. 204-05.

This social character of Russian literature, combined with the keen realism of an overwhelming majority of the Russian writers, makes it a treasury of social types, characters, descriptions of social movements in their human aspects. Many works of Russian literature are nothing else than studies in peasant life, in workingmen's ideas, in intellectual aspirations, in social and political struggles. A movement of momentous importance, as was the revolution, impressed itself on the mind of *every Russian writer,* and every one responded by describing one or another phase or character of those stormy years.

Out of this tremendous flood of literary work we shall pick out some of the most adequate descriptions of persons or events and try to reproduce them in brief outlines, not refraining from using also other documents where typical cases are represented.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### "I AM YOUR TZAR AND GOD"

The Russian administration was more than a group by itself. It was almost a different race. Long years of selection gave the Russian administrator a peculiar stamp, a unique frame of mind, an odd conception of the world. Not every one could become a member of this strange organization. In the higher ranks, an ability to overlook the most glaring signs of the times, an ability to live in a realm of illusions and yet to appear very farsighted, shrewd and resourceful was required; in the lower ranks, unreasoning obedience, readiness to throw oneself upon a victim and to tear his flesh notwithstanding personal feelings, aptitude to carry out the wildest orders, sometimes contradicting each other, were considered the most indispensable qualities. Had a Russian administrator to be honest? No doubt, honesty was essential in the career of a "Tchinovnick," but it was a class honesty, confined to one group. An honest administrator was the man to whom the interests of the bureaucracy were supreme; dishonest was the official who "did not justify expectations." As regards relations with the general public, common honesty was not a part of the moral code of the administration. Here the infinitely more important qualities of rigidity, of uniformity in procedure, of "digging out the roots of evil" were features making an official welcome in the family of his brothers. On the other hand, a critical mind, a thorough knowledge of facts, a desire to serve the interests of the public were incompatible with the position of an administrator.

There is no doubt that many a member of the executive machinery honestly believed he was serving a righteous

cause. Years of training in special segregated schools, years of intercourse with one kind of people, continuous breathing of the same atmosphere in the bureaucratic offices, resulted in a sort of moral *Daltonism*. Group virtues obfuscated all others. The approval of superiors took the place of moral satisfaction. "Representing the government" induced a man to believe he was right in all his actions. "I am your Tzar and your God" was used by local authorities not merely in the heat of anger. A man delegated by the highest Powers on earth and heaven could hardly feel himself restrained by foolish laws, moral or legal. After all, the people he had to deal with were a "poor and dirty mob," while he was strong, prosperous, resplendent, backed by so many others, also strong, prosperous, resplendent, members of his caste. He was right. He could not be otherwise.

And it is remarkable that none of the Russian writers, great or small, took the administrator seriously. This cannot be explained by the mere fact that Russian literature was progressive. The type in itself was so exceedingly humorous that writers of *all* political and social creeds were obliged to see it in the same way. In fact, when the situation of the officials later, in the time of the revolution, became pathetic, Russian literature, progressive and radical as it was, registered the human part of the tragedy. In the pre-revolutionary time, however, the attitude of the literature was only satirical. There is not even hatred in the hearts of the writers. How can one hate an unpleasant chemical compound or nasty weather?

We shall quote two writers, one a radical and a satirist, M. Saltykov-Shchedrin, and the other a conservative and a friend of the dynasty, Prince Vladimir Meshcherski; and we shall see that the types depicted by both are identical in nearly every detail.

Theodor Krotikov, writes Shchedrin,* was merrily passing his time in the fashionable restaurants of Peters-

* *Pompadours*, Chapter IX.

burg. He was a good fellow. He was spending money with a free hand. In the meantime he was listening to the utterances of administrators flocking to the capital from all the provinces and discussing affairs around the wine-table. Theodor Krotikov made himself acquainted with the "spirit of the time." Then he managed to gain admittance into important circles, made some striking remarks about the disadvantages of excessive centralization and the necessity of decentralizing Russia through increasing the power of the local administration, and deplored the fact that the higher government was too much occupied with trifles, while the main task—the inner political situation—remained unheeded. Theodor Krotikov did not know himself what he was talking about. But he found favor and was appointed governor of a province.

His administrative career begins.

He knows nothing. He has no experience and does not care for any. He has no idea as to the problems of administration, nor does he feel the need of any. The routine work is being done by the various offices in the established manner, and as to general policies, their outlining requires only courage and vivacity of mind, two qualities the young administrator possesses in a prodigious measure.

At the beginning he is "liberal." He writes a memorandum in which he defends freedom of smoking in the streets, freedom of choice by each individual as regards the cut of his clothes, freedom of wearing whiskers and long hair. The memorandum is received in the high "spheres" with favor. In his province Krotikov follows a policy of unflinching liberalism. He issues orders to establish factories, to populate and fertilize deserts, to develop transportation, crafts, trades, navigation. He expresses his firm belief that agriculture, aided on one side by horticulture and on the other by improved cattle-breeding, will bring the best results. He does not care

whether all these orders can be carried out. He is delighted by the fact that he is an administrator, that he has power. He addresses merchants, urging them to establish leather and soap factories; he speaks to the nobility on the necessity of setting a good example. He is very active. He visits the fire station, the prison-house, the shops; he combats the pest, the cholera, the smallpox and the anthrax, and, of course, he is extremely rigorous in collecting the arrears in taxes, this being the chief evidence of administrative efficiency.

Soon he discovers, however, that his orders are in vain. Factories are not established, navigation does not develop, the cholera refuses to disappear, the merchants are persistent in their backwardness and ignorance, and agriculture, seconded by anthrax, yields more pig-weed than corn. The only field where Krotikov has succeeded is in the collecting of arrears and the quelling of revolts. In all other respects he has utterly failed.

Our administrator becomes morose. Not understanding the causes of his failure, he puts the blame on liberalism in general. He is disappointed. He is melancholy. He complains. There is nobody to work with, he asserts. Still, he makes a final attempt. He writes a circular letter to his subordinates emphasizing the necessity of industry, commerce and transportation. He demands a strenuous effort. "For the last time I ask you," he writes, "to stir the public spirit, to arouse in it a tendency toward great and daring actions (not resorting, for the time being, to bodily exhortations). Of the results of your talks, persuasions and admonitions you must inform me semi-weekly." But this circular fails to create prosperity in the province.

Krotikov gives up "liberalism." Times have changed, and the administrator changes with them. He now scents an "intrigue." He seeks for "hints and clues." He looks with suspicion on the buildings of the Zemstvo office and the court, institutions that are supposed to be

the source of liberal spirit. Still he is doubtful. He has no policy to follow. He aches for activity.

Then his task suddenly reveals itself. He must eradicate the "evil spirit"! He must combat the pernicious trend of mind! He must fight the enemies of law and order! He has found himself.

Theodor Krotikov is full of joy. He will make himself conspicuous among other administrators. His work will be appreciated "higher up." He discharges his former associates and coworkers. He selects a new set of subordinates capable of doing the work of extermination. As a matter of fact, there is no revolutionary movement in his province. But this does not hinder him in his war against the "spirit." There are the Zemstvo institutions. There are the courts. There are the schools. All these are nests of sedition. Knowledge is a double-edged weapon, he says. If knowledge does not lead people to obedience and reverence for established authorities, better exterminate knowledge.

Krotikov is triumphant. In his administrative zeal he doubles his activities. His subordinates make raids on private residences, search rooms, seize loads of books and papers, imprison scores of innocent persons. Krotikov's mistress (every "decent" administrator is supposed to have an officially recognized mistress, sharing his honors and playing a rôle in society) helps him in his work. Together they wage war against materialism, together (with the aid of police-captains) they induce the population to go to church.

Theodor Krotikov is now a recognized statesman.

The figure of this administrator is exaggerated, no doubt. Yet behind its exaggeration in form it contains a true substance. It is a fact that the Russian administrators belonged either to the "liberal" or to the conservative variety, the liberal having the welfare of the country on his lips, while the conservative had nothing on his lips but venom. It is a fact that the difference between

the liberal and the conservative administrator was a nominal one, both disregarding the actual needs of the population, both exercising arbitrary power over people deprived of all political rights, and both believing themselves to be the source of the highest wisdom. It is a fact that in the last years before the revolution no administrator could make a career for himself who did not become notorious through combating the evil spirit.

Prince Vladimir Meshcherski, as we have mentioned above, was a staunch defender of absolutism in its extremest form. None was more venomous in attacking radicals and revolutionists than the old prince in his magazine *Grashdanin.* Still, Prince Meshcherski was a keen observer, and in his novels we find the same type of the ignorant, stubborn, conceited, yet successful, administrator.

Count Ivan Obezyaninov * thought that governmental affairs were his vocation "because he was very good looking, had received his education in one of the aristocratic military schools, was thirty-four years of age, had never been up for trial by court excepting on two occasions, when he was fined for breaking windowpanes in certain houses while under the influence of liquor." In political matters Count Obezyaninov loved to talk about things he did not understand. Every one who discussed the Zemstvo he called a "liberal," without knowing why. When he was appointed governor of Kamarino he did not know the location of the province on the map and had no knowledge of law. Still he decided to rule with a firm hand. "My ideal is Bismarck," he said. "That's the man we need! An iron hand, a mind of genius!" His administrative program was "to establish a good fire department, to exterminate mendicancy, to take care of the prison, to have gas-lighting installed all over the city, if possible, and in general to drive the Zemstvo and all

* V. P. Meshcherski, *One of Our Bismarcks* and *Count Obezyaninov in a New Position.*

similar elements into a corner." As to the details of administrative work, he decided to leave them to his assistants, while he himself would be the "conductor," the "general guide" of the public spirit.

"My chief problem," he said to his assistant, "is to improve and strengthen the power of the administration, which has become very lax."

"But how will you improve the power of the administration without going into details?" the assistant remarked.

"Very simple. I will establish a perfect system of police; I will have honest, reputable people, through whom I can find out everything. That's all."

"Am I to understand that in your opinion the police and the administration are the same thing?"

"Exactly the same."

"But how about the Zemstvo? Suppose you come into conflict with the Zemstvo, how can you use your police?"

"As to the Zemstvo, my friend, it is easy to avoid conflicts. I'll keep a tight hand over them, that's all."

Furnished with such a program, he arrived in Kamarino and was given a splendid reception. The chief of police was doing his best to please the new governor. When he went out for a walk, "the street in front of the house was strewn with sand, the policemen almost reminded him of their Petersburg colleagues in stature and dress, and, to crown the pleasant picture, all the houses in the vicinity of the count's residence and many houses on Main Street were decorated with flags."

The count at once formed a good opinion of the chief of police. Had he given himself the trouble to look into the police station he would have discovered that six citizens had been arrested on the previous night by the chief of police for attempting to hand the count a petition against the same official. Similarly, he would have discovered that three other prisoners had been arrested for disobeying the order to extend the new governor a hearty

welcome. But the governor did not care for details, and the reputation of Perepentyev, the chief of police, was established.

When the local administrative bodies presented themselves to the governor he made an eloquent speech, expressing his purpose to be firm and relentless in his struggle against the secret enemies of the administration.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am the first to regard freedom, but I cannot permit disloyal or ill-intentioned freedom to exist. It is my duty, gentlemen, to explain each time which kind of freedom I can approve of. I shall ask you, therefore, to take my advice on each occasion and not to listen to those who entertain impossible thoughts about freedom." (Here he cast a glance at the representatives of the Zemstvo.) The governor further emphasized the fact that he was the sole ruler of the province, "the chief master, the guardian of order, good behavior and good morals. I hope, gentlemen," he said to the Zemstvo members, "you will understand that I am the master of the province and that nobody will be permitted to give orders in my Kamarino."

Thus began the administrative career of Count Obezyaninov.

"Many things happened in his time," the author says, "he himself, however, accomplished nothing because there was nothing in him. Questions about the character of administrative work and how to start it, essential questions full of deep, vital meaning could never be born in the mind of Count Obezyaninov, because that mind was empty." Kamarino appeared to him a maze of fields, houses and humble, bowing people. He disliked the Zemstvo because its chairman was not submissive enough in personal relations; he sympathized with the nobility and officialdom because they gave a dinner in his honor. Because of this, the author says, he considered that the nobility and officialdom were momentous parts of the state.

At the beginning he happened to have one honest, efficient assistant who cautioued him against lawless acts, frankly expressing his own views and opinions. This man was extremely disagreeable to the administrator and to the other Tchinovincks. An intrigue was devised against him, he was charged with liberal tendencies and had to go. The chief of police, Perepentyev, and another official, Maklakov, who had hatched the plot against their honest colleague, became the favorites of their superior. The chief of police knew how to please. He had noticed that the count liked to have his dog petted, from which he concluded that he would like still more to be petted himself. The chief of police surrounded the governor with an atmosphere of flattery, servility and adulation. The governor trusted him blindly. The province was virtually in the grip of Perepentyev and Maklakov, who were well versed in the art of fishing in troubled waters.

Count Obezyaninov was not accustomed to work; moreover, he mistrusted work. One of the reasons for his pugnacious attitude toward the Zemstvo institutions was the fact that they were absorbed in strenuous work. The active members of the Zemstvo did not limit themselves to office hours, but gathered privately in the chairman's residence to discuss problems and work out projects in the sweat of their brow. Their gatherings, full of useful work, lasted sometimes till two or three in the morning, and although nothing that they planned or debated was unlawful, they were denounced to the governor as secret political meetings dangerous to the government and to peace and order. This the count believed. How else could he explain people's working late into the night?

He took his own office very lightly. Having only a very vague idea of his duties or jurisdiction, he kept "aloof," which meant that he did nothing. He increased the personnel of his office, reinforced the police, established a number of new commissions, issued a series of ferocious orders to the local authorities of the province,

one of them threatening the chiefs of the county police with discharge should they fail to collect the arrears within two weeks (arrears that had accumulated through decades). Another order instructed the police "to keep a vigilant eye over the spirit and general attitude of the population and to report on all changes taking place in the aforesaid." After this, the count felt himself perfectly justified in reporting to his superiors in Petersburg that he "had introduced reforms tending to increase the authority of the governor as a representative of the supreme power." Having put through all this statesmanlike program, Count Obezyaninov had leisure to devote himself freely and unequivocally to the tender passions. The province was supposed to be flourishing.

A glimpse of the actual situation we have in the description of how the county chief of police, Ivan Artemyevich, collected the arrears in a certain village. Like a thunderbolt from a clear sky he fell upon the unsuspecting villagers. Panic, anguish and despair surged in their simple hearts when they heard the fateful bell of the chief's carriage. The chief called a village meeting, and the authorities threatened with arrest and severe punishment those who failed to pay their share. Then they set to work executing the order. From house to house the authorities went, seizing chickens and geese and calves and horses, to be sold at an auction to follow, in payment of the taxes. Women wept, children cried. The chief himself was sympathetic. He was a kind-hearted man and he knew the peasants were unable to pay; moreover, he knew it meant ruin when they were deprived of the cattle necessary for the cultivation of the fields. Yet he did not shirk. His own position was at stake.

The same scenes were repeated in all the other villages all over the province. In a few days the county chiefs of police were in a position to report considerable progress. One of them was particularly proud to relate that his efforts had been crowned with success, in spite of the fact

that the population was famine-stricken after the bad crops of the preceding year.

The machinery of the administration was in full swing.

Count Obezyaninov was an honest man, of course. But he could not help it when his private interests coincided with the interests of the state. There was a railway line to be constructed in the province. The Zemstvo wished to construct the line and save public money; but the Zemstvo was liberal and full of evil spirit. Mitridatov, the business man who offered himself to the governor as a contractor, asked a very high price, but he was an honorable, loyal and devoted citizen. It so happened that the same Mitridatov offered to rent the count's private estate on very favorable terms and to have the railway line pass near the estate, which would increase the value of the latter; whereas in the Zemstvo plan the line would be run far from the count's estate. It does not reflect upon the patriotic feelings of our administrator that the contract was concluded with Mitridatov, who, as the count's tenant, secured a right to call the villagers through the local police when they were needed for certain kinds of work.

Representatives of the Zemstvo attempted to argue. They pointed out that Mitridatov was a crook, that he had no money and that the line constructed according to his plans would be of no economic value. The governor replied to the delegation: "I am utterly indifferent as to whose interests you are defending, your own or your Zemstvo's. I am the master of Kamarino, and I, not you, have the right to manage affairs. Here, in Kamarino, I am restricted by no laws or anybody's order. Your solicitation will be given consideration only when I find it worthy of the government's attention." The Zemstvo appeals to Petersburg, but, of course, Count Obezyaninov wins against the "liberal opposition."

Count Obezyaninov undertakes a trip through the province. The local authorities exert every effort that

no complaints reach the master of the province. Those who are suspected of being "unreliable" have to wait in jail till the count's visit to their locality is over. The police urge the peasants to meet the governor with bread and salt and offer him valuable gifts. The count is delighted. He reports to Petersburg that the rural population of his province is prosperous, suffering only from an excess of freedom in local self-government. He praises the police as the most reliable institution and recommends highly the "worthy business man," Mitridatov.

A time comes when the numerous complaints before the Petersburg authorities make it impossible for him to remain in Kamarino. He goes to Petersburg, where he finds that he is compromised badly. This, however, does not hamper his career. He has connections. He visits high officials. He impresses them by his extreme opinions with regard to inner political matters. He visits a powerful and charming countess who controls a powerful old prince—and he becomes an administrative star. "Count Obezyaninov," the author meditates, "did not find favor with the population of Kamarino, and there was a reason for it. Count Obezyaninov did not find favor with his minister, and there was a reason for that, too. Yet Count Obezyaninov did find favor with Prince Semyon Ivanovitch; Count Obezyaninov did find favor with Countess Rovinskaya and the old prince, and the trick was turned speedily and smoothly. It was Fate's desire. Can you argue against Fate?"

Count Obezyaninov becomes head of a department in Petersburg, master over the destinies of millions of people.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THREE WAGON-LOADS OF RODS

Are the writers we have quoted true to life? Are not administrators of the Krotikov-Obezyaninov type products of an erratic imagination?

To answer this question we cite the following story, which is not fiction, but a narrative of real facts. It contains one of many dramas which could not even be commented upon by the newspapers and were unknown to the general public. This particular drama escaped complete oblivion owing to the circumstance that it came up for discussion in the higher governmental institutions which keep records of their proceedings.

The dramatis personæ are:

*Ivan Pushchin,* a landlord.

*Kologrivov,* a Zemski Natchalnik (one of the local gentry in charge of the peasants' affairs. The Zemski Natchalnik combines judicial and administrative power over the peasants. His decisions are carried out by the local police).

*Zvenigorodski,* chief of the county police.

*Semov,* chief of the district police (subordinate to the chief of the county police, who is subordinate to the governor of the province).

*Nekludov,* governor of the province of Oryol.

*Peasants,* old and young. Peasant girls.

*Soldiers* of the Thirty-sixth Infantry Division.

Place: The Village Obolesheva, Oryol County, Province of Oryol.

Time: 1892.

The material is furnished by *official documents,* namely, the record of the Senate proceedings and the decision of the Ministers' Committee. The author has arranged the material in chronological order so as to make the survey more comprehensive.

Here is the story:

The peasants of the village of Obolesheva owned community-land on both banks of the river Tzona. Farther down the river was the estate of Mrs. Pushchin, and her water-mill. The mill was fed from a water-reservoir formed by a dam. The dam across the river connected the peasants' community-land on either bank. Every year the dam was damaged by spring waters, and for many years the peasants had repaired it for a certain remuneration. In 1892, however, when Mrs. Pushchin became owner of the estate and the mill, her husband, Ivan Pushchin, acting in her name, declared that the repairing of the dam was a duty of the peasants; they had to do it for nothing, he asserted, because his wife, as a landowner, was legally a partner in the community-land of the peasants. The peasants refused to work without pay. Pushchin brought this fact to the attention of the Zemski Natchulnik Kologrivov. Kologrivov came to Obolesheva and ordered the peasants to fill in the gap in the dam without waiting for the decision of the courts. This was on July 15th. On July 16th the peasants petitioned Kologrivov to be allowed to delay the execution of his order for two days, a member of the county court being expected in Obolesheva. To this Kologrivov agreed. In the meantime a wagon of straw was brought to the dam, to serve as material for the filling of the gap. The peasant girls of Obolesheva surrounded the wagon and turned it over; then they ran away. Kologrivov, the Zemski, then ordered that the women of Obolesheva be imprisoned for three days, one woman from each family. The names of the women were not specified in his order.

The order had to be carried out by the local policeman; but as the peasants refused to deliver their women voluntarily, the policeman was powerless. The Zemski Natchalnik then ordered the syndic of the Bogdanov district to arrest the women without resorting to violence or irritating the population. In this the syndic did not succeed.

The landlord, Mr. Pushchin, informed the governor of the province that there were disturbances and lawless acts on the part of the peasants in Obolesheva. Simultaneously, he informed the county chief of police that the governor's attention had been called to the disorders in Obolesheva, and that he, the county chief, should be ready to respond to the inquiry of the governor. The county chief, Zvenigorodski, ordered the district chief of police, Semov, to investigate the case. Semov reported that there were no disturbances whatsoever, the peasants simply refusing to comply with the order of the Zemski Natchalnik, pending the decision of the courts. The county chief took no further action. On August 4th, however, he was summoned to the governor and severely rebuked for not reporting to him on the events in Obolesheva. Simultaneously with Zvenigorodski, the Zemski Natchalnik, Kologrivov, was summoned to the governor. Kologrivov made a statement of the case. Asked as to how he was going to enforce his decisions, Kologrivov said that the women would be arrested without interference from the outside, while it would be wise to postpone the construction of the dam till the arrival of the member of the county court.

The governor did not agree with the Zemski Natchalnik. He was for quick action. He therefore told the county chief to go to Obolesheva and enforce both the imprisonment of the women and the construction of the dam. On August 5th the county chief, Zvenigorodski, went to Obolesheva, arrested eight of the most influential peasants and, accompanied by two district chiefs and three policemen, ordered the remaining peasants imme-

diately to fill in the gap and deliver the women. No specification as to the women to be arrested was made, the Zemski Natchalnik's order being that where there were more than one woman in a family, preference should be given to the one who had no children and no care of the household. The peasants refused either to deliver the women or to repair the dam. As was afterwards stated by the district chief of police, Semov, the peasants were civil to the authorities. There were no riots and no insults. The peasants simply answered that the decisions of the authorities would not be carried out before the arrival of a member of the court. "The peasants of Obolesheva," the district chief stated, "were by no means rude. They are peaceful, reverent and humble people, and rudeness is alien to their nature."

The county chief and his associates were in a difficult situation. They were few, while the peasants were many. Nevertheless, they started to enforce their orders. The women having fled from their houses, they tried to arrest every woman they encountered in the streets. The men, however, interfered, protecting the women. Protests were heard, such as: "We'll go to Siberia," "We won't give up the women," "Pushchin's hirelings," etc. Many women, in sheer fright, fled to the river and, holding their babies on their arms, waded into the water till it was above their waists. Seeing that the imprisonment of the women under such circumstances was impossible, the authorities tried to enforce the filling in of the gap. The peasants resisted peacefully, their resistance expressing itself in not allowing a wagon loaded with straw and brush-wood to proceed to the dam. The county chief was disconcerted. "A formal resistance," he said to the district chief, "consists in interference with the actions of any of the authorities, while here no such interference takes place." Thereupon he ordered one of the policemen to drive the wagon. The peasants took the reins from the hands of the policeman and drove the wagon

back. Then the county chief himself tried to drive the wagon. The peasants repeated their resistance. The county chief was satisfied. "See," he said, "now we have sufficient resistance." The district chief, Semov, tried to induce the peasants to obey, but the latter only murmured: "Your honor, don't you see what they are going to do? They are strangling us."

The county chief reported to the governor the failure of his expedition. A report was sent to the district attorney, but it was intercepted by order of the governor. Immediately after receiving the report of the county chief, Governor Nekludov asked the commander of the Thirty-sixth Infantry Division to send a company to Obolesheva. On August 6th the company started for Obolesheva, accompanied by a police officer who received from the governor the following instructions: 1, to secure from the Zemski Natchalnik a list of the "women to be arrested"; 2, to prepare horses and a carriage for the governor on the station Naryshkino, where the county chief of police was to await his arrival on the following day; 3, to call to Obolesheva the syndics of the neighboring villages and as many village-reeves as could be gathered; 4, to prepare as many rods as possible.

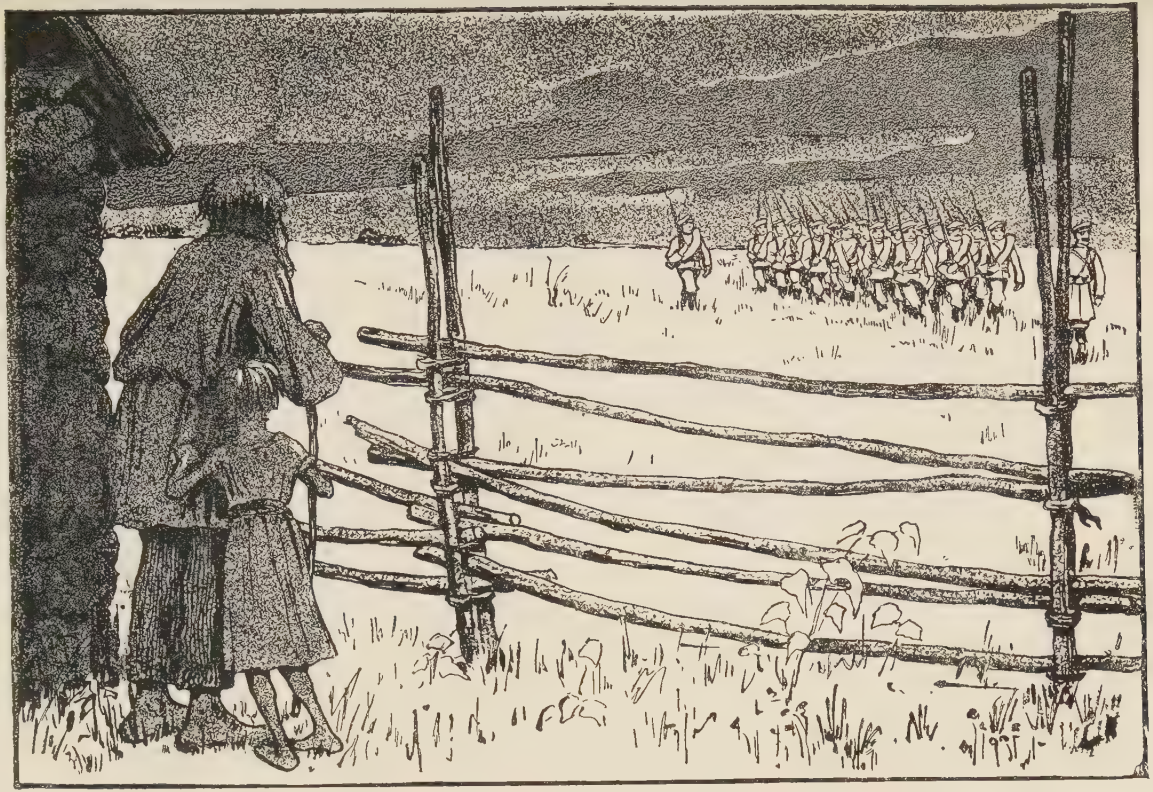
All these instructions were punctually carried out by the police officer, who prepared three wagon-loads of rods. On the morning of August 7th the governor arrived at the railroad station Naryshkino, accompanied by the county physician. On the same train twenty-five Obolesheva peasants were brought back from Oryol to Naryshkino. Those peasants were representatives of the Obolesheva community who had gone to the province capital to present a petition to the governor. They had been arrested by order of the governor, brought back to Naryshkino and, under escort, sent to their native village. While they were being walked home the governor went for luncheon to the home of the landlord Pushchin, where the county chief handed him a list of the women to be

arrested, and also a list of the peasants who had offered resistance. With the aid of Pushchin and the county chief, the governor marked against each name the number of rods to be given to the peasant. Chief among them were the eight peasants arrested on August 5th, who obviously could not have participated in the resistance which took place while they were locked in. After luncheon the governor proceeded to Obolesheva, a distance of three versts from M. Pushchin's estate.

In Obolesheva the governor found all the inhabitants of the village gathered on the village-place, surrounded by soldiers. At sight of the governor, all the peasants fell on their knees, begging for mercy. Without requesting the community to obey the orders of the authorities, the governor started the execution. One peasant after another was called, according to the list worked out in Mr. Pushchin's house, and punished with rods in the presence of the governor and all the community. The number of strokes assigned to each peasant varied from 50 to 150. The first peasant had to receive 150 strokes. After the fortieth stroke he fainted, and the governor asked the county physician Krassin to examine the man "to see how far he was pretending." The physician stated that the continuation of the execution might be dangerous, but the governor exclaimed: "What nonsense!" and the execution continued. After the eightieth stroke the scene was repeated. After all the 150 strokes had been inflicted, the man was unconscious for a whole hour, notwithstanding medical aid. In the same manner all the other peasants on the list were punished. The execution was so severe that the police officer fainted and had to be led away from the place. On the same spot the county chief of police, Zvenigorodski, was ordered by the governor to hand in his resignation for not having prepared a bench for the execution and cold water to pour on those fainting under the rods. Among the punished were five peasants who had been under arrest on August

5th, when the disobedience of the peasants occurred. Besides the punishment by rods, four peasants were arrested by the governor. After the execution the governor ordered the arrest of the women for three days to be carried out. Then he ordered the peasants to fill in the gap in the dam across the river. Both orders were fulfilled in the presence of the governor. Leaving Obolesheva, the governor made a speech to the peasants assembled on the dam, saying that he had been a friend of Pushchin and his wife's brothers for many years, that he knew they were very good people, and that any disobedience on the part of the peasants would lead to a punishment doubly severe. On the following day the county chief of police, Zvenigorodski, handed in his resignation, and on August 9th he was discharged. One of the peasants who on the day of the execution had fled from the village, was subsequently seized, brought to the province capital, Oryol, and given seventy-five rod-strokes.

In March, 1893, four of those who had been punished brought the case before the Governing Senate, charging the governor with illegal conduct. Their complaint was based on the fact that in disobeying the illegal order of the authorities to do work they were not obliged to do they had committed no crime whatsoever. This opinion was held by the Kharkov circuit court, which had had a hearing on the case and decided that "the action of the Obolesheva peasants, expressed in passive resistance to the illegal demands of the police, contained no elements of crime." The Senate asked the governor for an explanation. The governor in his report to the Senate admitted that he had ordered many of the Obolesheva peasants to be punished with rods for disturbances, but this measure, he asserted, was fully justified by the unrest prevailing among the peasants of his province in 1892, when the famine and the subsequent epidemics of cholera had created a spirit of rebellion. Under such conditions, the governor wrote, any disturbance of peace and order



PUNITIVE EXPEDITION APPROACHING A VILLAGE

ignored by the governor or not quelled from the beginning might have grown to enormous dimensions.

This explanation found no favor with the Senate. The Senate saw no element of rebellion in the refusal of the Obolesheva peasants to obey an illegal demand of the Zemski Natchalnik. As to the governor, the Senate resolution states that "he was influenced by motives having nothing to do with the interests of state service. It is stated with positive certainty," the resolution says, "first, that the governor did not and could not receive intelligence of the occurrences in the village of Obolesheva from the proper authorities, since neither the local county chief of police, nor the Zemski Natchalnik saw in the actions of the peasants elements of resistance or disobedience demanding extraordinary measures; second, that the intelligence of the aforesaid occurrences was received by the governor from private sources—from the nobleman Pushchin, who was interested in the case and whose testimony should have been taken with the utmost caution. It is further evident from the case that Councilor of State Nekludov, being an old friend of the Pushchin family, made all his orders in accordance with the advice and recommendations of Pushchin, taking the latter's counsel even as to the selection of the peasants to be submitted to corporal punishment and the number of strokes to be assigned to each, and directing his actions to the obvious injury of the Obolesheva peasants and the benefit of Pushchin in fulfilment of claims by the latter, which were afterwards recognized by the courts as without foundation."

On the basis of these facts, the Senate found that a criminal prosecution against Governor Nekludov would be required by law, and that, pending the investigation, the governor would have to be removed from his office. However, considering that Governor Nekludov still remains in his position, that the investigation of the governor's actions would have to be conducted by a magistrate of the local court in the province where Governor

Nekludov is the highest authority, and that officers subordinate to the governor and private persons would have to be interrogated, an admittedly unsatisfactory and undesirable procedure, the Senate recommended the Committee of Ministers to present the case to His Imperial Majesty, asking that M. Nekludov might be exempted from criminal prosecution and given a severe reprimand instead.

The Committee of Ministers held a hearing on the case. The committee admitted that the governor had violated the law, but found strong reasons in his favor. Part of the committee's resolution reads: "The committee could not overlook the statement of the Minister of Finance (S. J. Witte) that in 1892, when councilor of state, Nekludov, was appointed governor of the Oryol province, he, Privy Councilor Witte, visited the provinces most afflicted by the cholera epidemics, including the province of Oryol; that he remembers well the state of mind, both of the population and of the local authorities in those provinces, and that, without justifying the conduct of Governor Nekludov, he can easily understand it. At that time the population of the central provinces and along the Volga was under the influence of the spreading cholera. Nearly every day telegrams were received telling of disturbances among the peasants. Under the prevailing nervous tension, men lacking calmness and sufficient judgment could be induced to see in every accident, however small, a beginning of serious disturbances. M. Nekludov, coming from the Volga provinces, might have been under the immediate influence of this general agitation, though in his province there were no sufficient causes."

Taking all this into account, the Committee of Ministers agreed with the Senate that Governor Nekludov, exempted from criminal prosecution, should be strongly reprimanded.

Governor Nekludov retained his position.

# CHAPTER XX

## THE ADMINISTRATOR UNDER FIRE

THE revolution came. The bureaucracy was threatened. The foe was no longer hidden, but stepped to the front, firearms in hand. The fight against him was no longer an "unrooting of the evil spirit," but a defense against numberless cunningly plotting and daring idealists unafraid of death. The administration could not remain good-natured any more. Its countenance became grim, its attitude merciless. It felt as if it lived in a hostile land. Every one not belonging to the bureaucratic organization was considered dangerous; in the herd of the administration itself black sheep were encountered here and there.

The situation of the high officials was bad, the situation of the lower executive officers worse. Every one lived under a terrific strain. Getting up in the morning, one was not certain to remain safe through the day; going to sleep in the evening, one was afraid of the shadows of the night. At the same time the higher authorities were insisting on vigorous measures. Deeds of bravery were requested from the police. Nerves were tense. The mood was practically hysterical. This accounts for the unusual cruelty manifested by so many good-natured Slavs. Life had become insane, speeding down a slippery precipice with dazzling rapidity. A bloody mist filled every soul. Could one expect justice or deliberation under such circumstances?

It is Maxim Gorky's merit to have given a characterization of an ordinary official of those times in his four-act play, *The Last.* Ivan Kolomiytzev, the main figure, is by no means an exception among chiefs of police.

He lacks education, of course. But had he enjoyed a good education he would not have been compelled to serve in the police. He drinks, he is dissipated, he accepts bribes; but all this goes with the job. A cruel job, the work of a chief of police. The political prisoners riot. Is this to be tolerated? The chief of police is responsible for peace and order. He quells the riot. Many are wounded, Two die. The press is indignant. Is he really guilty?

"Why did you order the prisoners to be beaten?" his wife asks.

"It is not true," he says in a low voice. "They were beaten before the arrest. They offered resistance."

"They were beaten on the way to prison, too."

"They offered resistance," he replies nervously. "They sang songs. They disobeyed. You know how irritable I am; I cannot stand contradiction. Don't forget that they were insolent, swaggering fellows, enemies of the Tzar and order. They are being hanged, put to hard labor. Why wasn't I allowed to make them be silent?"

"Two were killed . . . two . . ."

"What does it amount to? They were feeble people, famished by unemployment; one rap on the forehead would have killed them. . . . The soldiers were mad," the man says. Then, after a while, he adds in a very sincere tone: "Yes, perhaps it is partly my fault—but everything is so topsy-turvy nowadays, you lose control, you live in constant agitation. . . . It's everybody's fault; yes, all are guilty. Others do more cruel things than I."

Ivan Kolomiytzev is convinced he is no worse than others, and so it is. Those fellows are being hanged, put to hard labor. They are practically outlaws. Can you handle them with silk gloves? Ivan Kolomiytzev is a cynic, greedy for lust, money and pleasure; but notice: when he speaks about his duties his language becomes solemn. "I am in the service of the Throne and public safety," he declares. "I am absorbed in important state affairs," he says at another time. "I am a guardian

of life's foundations." There is an element of the comedian in Kolomiytzev, perhaps a characteristic feature of every subordinate official in a bureaucratic system where the man is judged not by his work but by his ability to please his superiors. In his talk about "life's foundations" there is a good deal of pose. Still, he is convinced he defends a right cause. His is not the power of thinking. He lives on group psychology, group morals.

There comes a day of revenge. A revolutionist makes an attempt on his life. Ivan Kolomiytzev behaves in a cowardly manner, shamefully. The attempt creates a sensation. The press makes a series of revelations as to the activities of the official. Public opinion becomes inflamed. Kolomiytzev is compelled to resign his position. Still, he never thinks he has been wrong. He puts the blame on the revolutionists. One of them had been arrested by the police after the attempt. Kolomiytzev is not sure he remembers his face, nevertheless he recognizes him as the man that made the attempt. The prisoner is awaiting death. The revolutionary organizations issue a statement confirming the innocence of the prisoner. Public sentiment is growing in his favor. Everybody is convinced Kolomiytzev has given false testimony.

And here the family drama sets in. Kolomiytzev's wife has never loved her husband. She has tolerated him for the children's sake, knowing his weaknesses and faults. Now she sees he is going to inflict death on an innocent youth who may have been a revolutionist by conviction, but who has had nothing to do with the attempt. Peter, the younger son, a high-school lad of eighteen years, becomes aware of his father's rôle in public life. His schoolmates call him the son of a murderer, a beast. The boy goes through a severe mental struggle, which results in hatred for his father. His sister Vera, a girl of sixteen, also begins to surmise the truth. The prisoner's mother, a respectable, beautiful old lady, visits Kolomiytzev's wife, begging her to save the life of her son. Mrs.

Kolomiytzev, shocked, terrified, despairing, has a talk with her husband. The conversation begins with remarks about the characters of their children. Mrs. Kolomiytzev says:

"Listen, you yourself were fighting against children for ten years."

*Kolomiytzev* (smiling). What does it mean?

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev* (forcefully). You were searching, seizing, arresting—whom?

*Kolomiytzev* (amazed). Whence this liberalism? You are funny, old woman. Don't talk nonsense.

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* You killed boys. One of the boys was seventeen years of age. And the girl you shot when searching her room! You are all covered with blood, the blood of children is on you, the blood of youth, yes! Didn't you say, time and again: they are mere boys? Didn't you?

*Kolomiytzev* (frightened, perplexed). What's the matter with you, Sophia? It's terrible.

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* Yes, it is terrible.

*Kolomiytzev.* You've collected all the slander and lies. Are there only youngsters among the enemies of order? Besides, what you say is dangerous. Should Peter or Vera hear you talk——

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* You've committed a despicable act, out of cowardice or anger.

*Kolomiytzev* (depressed). I am a nobleman, Sophia, I cannot allow——

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* You testified against a young man, asserting he'd made an attempt on your life. Do you know, are you sure it is the same man? Did you see him shooting?

*Kolomiytzev.* I see! You've been instigated by his mother——

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* Can you give your word of honor, right here, before the holy ikons, face to face with me, that he is the person who fired?

*Kolomiytzev* (angrily). I've had enough now! I understand! I'll show her!

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev* (approaching her husband). Ivan, you must tell the gendarmes you were mistaken, the young prisoner is not the man who fired on you. You'll say it!

*Kolomiytzev* (frightened by her tone). And if not?

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* Yes, you'll say it. For Christ's sake, I beg of you——

*Kolomiytzev.* This is appalling! Suppose I am convinced he is guilty?

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev.* No, no, this is not true! At any rate, I do not appeal to your heart; it is useless to call out in the wilderness. I want to say just this: if you don't admit your mistake, I will tell Peter and Vera. . . . Please, Ivan, do it for the children's sake!

*Kolomiytzev* (doubtfully). You are violating my will! It's madness!

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev* (becoming weaker). Do as I say and you'll feel you are a better man. Please do it.

*Kolomiytzev* (giving in). Let's end this! Of course, to me it is—but let him go to hell, the damned rascal. True, I am not convinced he is the one that fired, but somebody has fired, anyway! I may even admit he is not the man; but is it worth while making a scene for such trifles? This is sheer madness, Sophia!

*Mrs. Kolomiytzev* (fatigued by the exertion; quietly). All my life is one continuous madness, and yours, too.

Note the remark: "Somebody has fired, anyway!" The sense of tribal justice demands that if a member of the tribe is attacked by a member of another tribe, the whole enemy tribe has to suffer. Kolomiytzev is not aware of the monstrousness of his remark. Neither did the officials think that they were committing an injustice when they imposed indemnities on an entire community or took hostages to secure the surrender of the revolutionists. "Inter arma silent leges." The entire country

was in a state of war. Is there any difference whether you kill one or the other of your enemies? "Somebody has fired, anyway!"

Kolomiytzev is, from his standpoint, a good citizen and a good father. He loves his children, especially the older son, Alexander, and the older daughter, Nadeshda, who is married to the prison physician. It is for the family's sake that he has gone into police service, and he is proud of it. He is ready to make sacrifices. He is deeply moved when he hears that his son Peter disapproves of his conduct. But those children are *his own,* they belong to his tribe, while all the others, real or suspected revolutionists, are enemies of his tribe!

Kolomiytzev promised his wife to admit his error in ascertaining the man who fired. In the meantime, however, he is notified that with the aid of his son-in-law he can secure an appointment as chief of county police. This is a rank lower than the position he has held before the attempt, but he thinks it will serve as a stepping-stone toward further advancement. His son-in-law admonishes him: "You have a name, your record is good. All those misunderstandings are becoming a matter of the past. The only thing you've got to do now is to be firm. The times of anarchy are passing; the government feels strong enough to restore order. It demands from its agents a strong hand." Kolomiytzev is embarrassed. Can he admit his error, in view of the near appointment? "Is it convenient that I should now become mixed up with this story?" he asks. "Just think of it: a county chief of police declaring publicly: I've committed an error! Would it not make a bad impression?" Both his son, Alexander, and his son-in-law agree that he has to stick to his former testimony. He must be firm. He must not show sentimentality. He must remember that admitting his error would be a blow to the gendarmerie which have conducted the case against the prisoner (the gendarmerie colonel is such a charming man and such a good partner in

whist!). Besides, as his son-in-law says, "Somebody has fired, anyway, and all those sharpshooters are close friends." It's a pity that the revolutionist did not wound the chief of police, he says, which would have helped him to advance; but, anyway, Kolomiytzev cannot now admit his error.

The fate of the prisoner is sealed. Kolomiytzev dismisses the case from his mind. The call of a new position, new work, new power, is too strong in him. What a joy to have an entire city trembling before you—a city full of merchants, business men, women, hosts of people left entirely to your mercy! Kolomiytzev is rejuvenated. All his other inconveniences are smoothed down, too. He has happened to burst the ear-drum of his office-messenger by hitting too hard. The man had complained. Now the district attorney has done away with the case. The newly appointed county chief of police is determined to be strong, unflinching, merciless. "We are victims of these terrible times, their spirit poisons everything, destroys all foundations," he declares. He is going to fight against this spirit. But, alas! all the time, through all his actions, *fear* will follow on his heels, breathing terror into his heart, making all his days one dismal agony and moving him to more hysterical and senseless cruelties.

This feeling of incessant fear following a governmental official who has caused the blood of the people to be shed is strongly pictured in Leonid Andreyev's story, *The Governor*. The hero of the story, the governor, is, in the main, a beautiful personality. He has a tender heart, a vivid imagination, a broad view of life. He has a strong feeling of justice. He is brave, courageous. Petty jealousies or ambitions are foreign to him. All these qualities, however, do not prevent him from living in a world of illusions, where only a few human beings are real, while the rest are manikins, dolls. Five years before the story begins he had punished villagers with rods and had found it merely funny. They had forcibly taken away some

grain from the landlords, those filthy Mujiks. The governor appeared on the scene of the disturbance with soldiers and police. The soldiers carried the sacks of grain from the peasants' houses, and it was funny to watch how those poor devils clung to the sacks, letting themselves be dragged over the ground, together with the precious food. It was funny to watch the helpless, clumsy movements, the wooden countenances of those who were being flogged. At that time the governor had felt no compunction. It was the established order of things. The central government had thanked him for his firm behavior in quelling the rebellion; his son, an army officer, was rapidly advanced in recognition of his father's deserts. The governor was prosperous, and no dark thought troubled his clear mind.

Then came the mad years, and the governor shed the people's blood. "The fact in itself," the author says, "was very simple, though sad. The workers of a suburban factory, who had been on strike for three weeks, came to the governor in a crowd of several thousand men, women and children, demanding things the governor had no power to grant and behaving in a defiant, impudent manner. They shouted, insulted the authorities, and one of the women, who looked very much like a lunatic, pulled him violently by his sleeve, so that the shoulder seam burst. Later, when the officials of his suite took him to the balcony, while he was still trying to make himself understood and to quiet the crowd, the workingmen began to throw stones, breaking several windows in the governor's house and wounding the chief of police. Then the governor lost his temper and waved the handkerchief.

"The crowd was excited, therefore the volley had to be repeated, and the number of killed was large—forty-seven persons, nine of whom were women and three children, all girls. The number of wounded was still larger."

It was this act that awakened the governor from his tribe-illusion and made him feel and understand in terms

of common human morality. He now sees his act in the strong light of conscience and keen regret, coupled with the despairing feeling that there is no redress and no deliverence. He is surrounded by the shadows of the dead, he is haunted by the images his mind reproduces before him over and over again, though he is no coward.

The soul drama of the governor as depicted by Andreyev, though it is one of the deepest and most stirring psychological studies, cannot be dwelt upon in this connection. What interests us here is the fact that after the day of the slaughter the governor was doomed to death and that there was no rescue from this verdict.

An implacable fate, an iron law, a blind, unreasoning force acting with the persistence of the forces of nature—this is how Leonid Andreyev sees the hand of the revolution following the man who shed the people's blood.

"On the very morning following the massacre of the workingmen," the author says, "the entire city knew the governor was going to be killed. Nobody spoke of it as yet, but everybody knew it, as if in the silence of the night, while the living restlessly slept and the dead were quietly lying in the fire-station barn, some dark being had hovered over the city, shadowing it with its black wings.

"And when the people began to speak of the assassination of the governor—some early, the more reticent later—they spoke of it as of a thing irrevocably decided upon. The majority spoke of it indifferently, as one speaks of a solar eclipse which will be seen only on the other side of the globe and which can be interesting only to the inhabitants of that hemisphere. The minority were excited, and discussed the question whether the governor deserved a cruel punishment like that and whether there was any sense in assassinating single persons, however injurious, while the whole tenor of life remained unchanged. There was a difference of opinion, but even the extremists showed no particular excitement, as if they were dealing

not with an event bound to come, but with an accomplished fact which no private opinions could alter.

"The discussions showed that the governor had more friends than enemies, and even among those who adhered to the theory of political assassinations there were many who found excuses for him. Had it been possible to take a vote in the city, an overwhelming majority, moved by various practical and political reasons, would have been against the assassination, or the execution, as many called it." And yet, everybody knew the governor was doomed to death. "Both the friends and the enemies of the governor, those who excused him and those who accused him were under the ban of the same unshakable certainty of his impending death. They had different thoughts and different words, but the feeling was the same, a tremendous, imperative, all-penetrating and all-powerful feeling, utterly indifferent to words, as only death can be. It was as if the ancient gray-haired law, paying death for death—a law long obsolete, nearly dead in the eyes of those who did not see—now opened its cold eyes, saw the killed men, women and children and stretched its implacable hand over the man who had done the killing."

The governor receives anonymous letters. In some of them he is pitied as a victim of circumstances, in many he is scorned or insulted; but all the writers are convinced that he is near death. His death is an object of conversation in the workshops, in the saloons, in family circles. Secret-service men guard the movements of the governor, Cossacks ride in front of his carriage when he goes to his country home, but all this is done in a rather perfunctory manner. The man is going to die, anyway, both he and his staff feel. Some strong, powerful being, never missing its aim, will wreak vengeance in the very near future. There has already been a rumor that he has been assassinated. For his immediate associates he is practically dead. He may still continue to give orders, he may be pleased or angry, he may act as any other living, human

being; for his friends, his family and his subordinates he is dead. A suspicious character has already been seized in the vicinity of the governor's house, and though no direct charges could be made against him, his behavior shows that he has been plotting something.

In the suburbs inhabited by the workingmen there was an uncanny silence. People had resumed their work after the massacre; on the surface everything was smooth, but the mood of the masses was dark, and the wound was bleeding, poisoning the public body with hatred, grief and despair. One of the women whose child had been killed became insane, and her wild screams and haunted look filled the suburb with pitiful horror.

Two weeks before the governor's death the mail brought him a package which turned out to contain an infernal machine. The device, filled with gunpowder, was supposed to explode on the opening of the package. But it was badly constructed by untrained hands and caused no harm. It was evident the man who had constructed the machine had no idea as to how such devices were made, and this only added to the cruelty and horror of the fact. "It was," the author says, "as if blind death had stretched out its feelers, groping about in the dark." The chief of police became irritated, the governor's wife insisted that her husband ask for an immediate leave of absence. The governor agreed, but, strangely enough, from now on he changed completely; he threw off all conventionalities, his face gained the expression of perfect truthfulness, which it had lacked when he was still among the living. The governor was patiently awaiting death, he was almost challenging it, walking among the distant streets of the town and exposing himself to danger.

The assassination took place in a very simple manner. Two men encountered the governor on a corner of a desolate street facing a little, muddy square. They were both poorly dressed, ill-fed and seemingly in bad circumstances. Their faces were greenish-pale and haggard. One of

them handed the governor a letter, as if it were a petition. At the same time he made strenuous efforts to pull out of his pocket the revolver, which had become entangled with the torn lining. The governor was killed by three loud revolver shots following one another.

Ancient Moira uncovered her face to the man who had shed the blood of the people.

# CHAPTER XXI

## IVAN ERMOLAYEVITCH THE TYPICAL PEASANT

I WAS once traveling on board a steamer over the Caspian Sea, says Gleb Uspenski,* when I became aware of a miserable, depressing feeling creeping into my soul. Nearly every minute our steamer met little boats laden with fish. "It's herring," somebody remarked. "They're going to be herring all the way through. Look, how thick. The same all the way through." These words, "all the way through," gave Uspenski a clue to his depressing mood. "Yes," he said to himself, "this is the reason why I am so melancholy. Now, everything is going to be the same 'all the way through.' The sheat-fish are moving in endless numbers, in tremendous hordes which cannot be dispersed; the herrings are advancing in the same manner, millions of them at a time, each individual the image of every other; and so it is with the mass of the people. It's the same 'all the way through,' from here to Archangel, from Archangel to 'Odesta,'† from 'Odesta' to Kamtchatka, from Kamtchatka to Vladikavkaz and further, to the Persian, to the Turkish frontier. . . . To Kamtchatka, to Odesta, to Petersburg, to Leonkoran, 'all the way through,' everything is the same, as if coined by the same machine: the same fields, the same corn-ears, the same earth, the same sky, the same Mujiks, the same peasant women, all of the same kind, all of the same brand, the same colors, thoughts, clothes, the same songs. . . . It's 'all the way through,'

* Gleb Uspenski (+ 1902) was one of the keenest and most talented observers of Russian peasant life. His stories, of a half-publicistic character, contain inestimable material regarding the life, characters and ideas of rural Russia towards the end of the nineteenth century.

† This is the way the common people pronounce "Odessa."

an ' all the way through ' nature, an ' all the way through ' population, ' all the way through ' morals, an ' all the way through ' truth, an ' all the way through ' poetry, in a word—a homogeneous hundred million people which lives the same life ' all the way through,' which possesses a kind of collective thought and which can be understood only in its collective capacity. To separate one unit from this mass of millions, say, our village reeve, Semyon Nikititch, and to try to understand him is impossible. . . . Semyon Nikititch can be understood only in a mass of similar Semyon Nikititches. The price of one herring is a trifle, while that of a million is a large sum; a million Semyon Nikititches constitute an organism, a being full of interest, while taken alone, with his individual thoughts, he is incomprehensible and inscrutable. . . . Millions of people live ' just like the others,' and every one of those ' others ' feels and knows that by himself he is worth only a trifle and that he amounts to something only when considered in the mass."

These words of Uspenski throw light on the entire village life of Russia at the end of the nineteenth century. It was a life whose economic basis was rapidly changing from a primitive natural state into that of modern industrial individualism, while the habits of thought and the level of culture, owing to the lack of civic rights and political freedom, still remained as primitive as under the yoke of serfdom. It was a life where the average peasant had not yet become self-conscious *as a personality* differing from all the others of his kin. It is due to this fact that whenever the Russian writer of the pre-revolutionary period describes a peasant's life and strife, he takes him as a representative of a class, much in the same manner as travelers describing the life of savage tribes take the individual as a typical representative of the tribe. The life is the same, " all the way through."

Here is a typical village and a typical peasant as described by Uspenski:

The village consists of low, dark structures, little sheds and low-roofed barns, mostly shaky and dilapidated. The streets are muddy. Trees are scattered here and there, but somehow they do not relieve the gloomy aspect of the village. Everything has been done without taste, without skill and seemingly without love.

Life in the village is poor; more notable than the poverty, however, is the lack of comfort. The streets are unpaved not because the village cannot afford paving, but because nobody thinks of such innovations. Many houses lack chimneys ("black houses" they are called in the village); when the stove is being heated the smoke fills the house, and doors and windows must be kept open; ceiling and walls are covered with soot—and yet it does not require a fortune to construct a chimney. Very seldom the houses have adjoining flower gardens, and in general the villagers do not care to make their abodes more attractive, though it could be done with very little labor and expense. The peasants endure the most intolerable inconveniences which could be easily removed by intelligent care and enterprise; but intelligence and the spirit of enterprise are just what the peasants lack.

And here is one of the aborigines, a man clinging to his native earth, a typical Mujik, Ivan Ermolayevitch. His interests are entirely confined to his village and to his piece of land. He cannot read nor write, nor has he any use for such scholarly acquirements. None of the peasants subscribes to a paper, not one in a thousand is interested in general political or social problems, or even in the affairs of his province or county. "For three months I have lived in a village at a time when our troops were crossing the Danube, fighting, dying, drowning, defeating and suffering defeats," Uspenski writes. "For three months reading, urban Russia was all a-thrill with the disquieting news of the war, and for all those three months I have not heard a word as to what was going on in the wide world. Nobody receives any papers, nobody goes to

the city or to the railroad station, every one being occupied with the orchards, the mowing, and other household work. The echo of historic events reaches the village in the form of orders, like 'To call the recruits of such and such a year,' or 'To confiscate the horses selected on such and such a date.' Aside from those official requests, nothing indicates the importance of the moment, there is nothing to show the place of the new recruits or horses in the sum-total of current events. The man who in a week or two is going to defend the Shipka or Kars or to liberate the Bulgarians, knows nothing about the Bulgarians or the Shipka, and the only thing that concerns him is the shoe-making inplements he has to sell for next to nothing."

So it was in 1878, so, in the main, it was fifteen or twenty years later. It is natural that people so isolated from the entire world as the villagers have nothing in common with members of other classes. The *caste spirit* is stronger in the peasant than in any other group of the Russian population. Our Ivan Ermolayevitch may greet in a friendly way the "gentleman" who happens to reside in the village, he may even exchange with him a few perfunctory words as to health, weather or crops, but there can be no actual common interest and no cordial relationship between these two. They cannot understand each other. In the eyes of Ivan Ermolayevitch every "gentleman," i.e., a man wearing city clothes and making a living not from manual work, is a "queer fellow," a "strange bird." "It is the firm conviction of the peasant," Uspenski says, "that the gentleman *understands nothing at all,* a conviction implanted in the very blood of the peasant. The gentleman may buy because he has money; he may sell because he has goods; he may require services and pay for them, or do anything else that money makes possible. In the course of those transactions, as long as a monetary connection between the peasant and the gentleman exists, they can be apparently close to each

other, they can conduct an 'intelligible,' though not always sincere conversation. Should the gentleman, however, try to continue his acquaintance simply as a human being, as man with man, in the same manner that peasants are acquainted with each other all their lives, his attempt would fail. Of what use can a gentleman be when he neither buys, sells nor requires service? What does he understand?"

Gleb Uspenski and many a Russian writer of the Narodniki were inclined to lay the blame for this mistrust on the "gentleman," his lack of persistence and his "gentlemanly" manners. The truth is that *no modern man,* however great his love for the common people, however great his adaptability or his readiness to suffer privation, could speak a common language with the Russian Mujiks as long as they remained in their primitive stage of culture. Not even the best among the intellectuals, men and women of the deepest love and sincerity, could be understood by the peasants.

Our Ivan Ermolayevitch knows only his immediate environment, and knows this badly. He suffers on account of his crass ignorance and does not feel it. For instance, to know the weather in advance is of great importance for his agricultural success, yet his ways of predicting the weather are strange, to say the least.

"I am afraid it is going to rain," he says on a clear summer day.

"Why? The sky is perfectly cloudless."

"Yes; but I feel a buzzing in my ears, and this indicates bad weather. Whenever you feel a rustling or a swirl around your ears, you must know it's a bad omen."

On another day Ivan Ermolayevitch will begin to recollect the weather of six months before. If it is, for instance, July 6th, he will think back to January 6th. This is not easy for a man who keeps no diary and has to rely on his memory only. Ivan Ermolayevitch will resort to the aid of his wife and other members of his family, and

with united forces they will firmly establish the fact that on January 6th past it was snowing.

"Well," says Ivan Ermolayevitch, "then I'll wait about drying the hay. If it was snowing on January 6th, on July 6th it will certainly rain."

Ivan Ermolayevitch has much more faith in sorcerers and conjurers than in physicians. He believes that the village witch can do harm to his cows or his horses, or even to the members of his family. He believes that certain peasants are imbued with an evil spirit, so that any business transaction with them may become injurious to the other party. He believes in an evil eye, in house demons, in ghosts, in fiends, and in the Old Gentleman himself entering the body of a young woman. In every village there used to be numbers of "possessed" women, poor hysterical creatures, who believed the Evil One was living in them and acting through them. The inhuman cries and yells and ghastly words of those afflicted victims might have horrified people with a stronger nervous system than the peasants. Numberless family dramas were due to those nervous diseases bred by ignorance and hardship and thought to be tricks of supernatural powers.

Ivan Ermolayevitch is a loving father, indeed. Yet when his boy is badly hit by the ram he takes less care of him than of the sick horse. "For a while the boy lay unconscious," Uspenski says, "then, when he came to, he began to sob like mad, out of sheer fright. It is quite possible that the results of this fright will be felt all his life. Ivan Ermolayevitch and his wife both 'labored' over the boy, they gave him applications of warm manure, for instance; they gave him an infusion of herbs to drink, and, in general, they cared for him and grieved over him. But they used only such things as could be found 'around the house,' as is, in general, the way of peasants. Yet when Ivan Ermolayevitch's mare began to limp, and his cure, consisting of some absurd mess smeared over a rag,

proved of no avail (a rag is in itself considered among the peasants something of a medicament), he went for the horse doctor, whom he paid three rubles in silver. I must call attention to the fact," the author continues, " that for the cure of horses the people developed a profession not entirely charlatanical. The horse doctor has some ' instruments ' invented by the people, he has ' certain,' exact methods, while for the cure of men there is no aid but that of conjurers who know less than horse doctors. When the boy is crying in agony, the parents can do nothing but weep and apply a rag with warm manure or some other trash that happens to be lying around the house."

It is a cruel life, and the peasant is used to cruelty. On a dark autumn night, when the sky is black, the wind is wailing and cold drops of rain are slowly falling, the work of wolves and horse thieves begins. The wolves are hungry and daring, and they attack the sheep and the cattle of the peasants in their very stalls. The horse thieves are not less hungry, but more cunning, and aided by the helplessness of the villagers they carry out their robberies on a large scale. Entire villages are kept in constant fear by bands of horse thieves, who do not hesitate even to kill or burn the houses of those who offer resistance. When at last the villagers lay hold of one of the thieves their sentence is unalterably death. The cruelty of the execution is appalling.

Cruelty in personal intercourse marks the entire life of the peasant. The father beats his children into unconsciousness. The husband beats his wife, sometimes twisting her loose hair around his hand and dragging her over the floor or the court-yard while striking her with the other hand. The employer beats his help, the saloonkeeper beats the customer for not paying promptly; the village reeve beats the members of his community for not following the laws, and the district chief of police beats all of them because he is chief of police. " Hitting one's

snout," "breaking the fellow's ribs," "making a black eye," are the most common expressions in the village.

Corporal punishment is recognized by law and exercised by the community to an amazing extent. Legally, the community court, consisting of peasants only, may sentence each member of the community to a certain number of rods. The punishment is inflicted not only for actual misdemeanors, but also for failing to pay one's share in the taxes which all the villagers are jointly responsible for. "The amount of flogging by decision of the community courts is enormous," Uspenski writes. "To investigate the decisions of the community courts (not to speak of looking into the real motives of those decisions) and to find out the actual numbers of those flogged, say, in the fall months alone, would make one's hair stand upright. In the summer of 1881 I personally witnessed the punishment every day of about thirty peasants. I could not believe my eyes when I saw a "team" of thirty grown-up peasants returning home after the execution, talking of indifferent matters.

"'Is it possible that these people have been flogged?' I asked the reeve, who, after the execution, stepped into my house to have a smoke.

"'Of course. I myself charged three of them.'

"I was puzzled by this," Uspenski writes. "I could not understand how it was possible for an earnest, clever peasant, a father of a family, a man whose daughter had become a bride, to be put on the floor, stripped of his clothes and lashed with birch rods.

"'Is it true that they are thrown forcibly onto the ground?' I asked the same reeve.

"'Some are thrown by force, some lie down willingly. To-day they all did it by themselves.'

"A peasant who only yesterday served as a juror in the circuit court and magnanimously saved an unlucky fellow by saying, 'Not guilty,'" Uspenski adds broodingly, "may be flogged to-day till the blood comes, for

the sole reason that, having met the head of the community while intoxicated, he addressed him with, 'You snub-nosed rabbit.'"

A poor, barren and cruel life is necessarily conducive to drink. The villagers were given to drunkenness almost without exception. Liquor, intoxication and the following remorse only increased the misery of the peasants and deepened their cruelty and hatred.

Ivan Ermolayevitch is a member of a land-community. The land is not his private property, but belongs to the entire community, which reapportions it according to the number of "souls" in each family. Yet Ivan has no communistic inclinations and is not capable of the simplest co-operation with his fellow-villagers. As a matter of fact, he hates the reapportionments. He thinks he is more industrious and more capable of hard work than most; twice already he has improved his share of land and been twice deprived of the results of his labors by new distributions. Perhaps he is justified in his critical attitude toward communal land-ownership as he knows it from his village experiences. His aversion to co-operation, however, is only due to his low level of culture. He might greatly increase the productivity of his land by using agricultural machines in copartnership with his neighbors, yet he cannot be induced to do so. One of his products is hay. The hay he sells to a middleman, who presses it and later in the year delivers it to various governmental institutions in Petersburg. The middleman is making a fortune. By purchasing a hay-press and delivering the product directly to Petersburg, the peasants could improve their condition. Still, they prefer to sell to the exploiting middleman. The reason is that they cannot agree on co-operation.

"At every turn I, a stranger to the village," Uspenski says, "could show where the people were losing, where they were ruining their well-being. Sometimes I became irritated at seeing the perfect indifference of such men as

Ivan Ermolayevitch to labor-saving devices, to anything that might secure the product to those to whom it belongs by right. Repeatedly, I had long conversations with him as to 'neglecting the common interest' or working for the enrichment of all sorts of robbers and exploiters. He was deaf and dumb. Nothing could be done in the way of collective defense against modern evils thrusting themselves upon the village."

The households of the peasants are isolated from each other, leading a perfectly independent life in spite of the communal ownership of land. "Each of the peasant houses, burdened by a large mass of moral difficulties that could be easily removed by *collective* attention, resembles an uninhabited island where day after day, with the most strenuous toil and patience, people are struggling for their existence. The weight of this burden is such that it seems impossible to live under its strain, and if the peasant families are continuing to struggle, it is perhaps due to their sincere belief that it is of God's disposing.

And, as the way is with helpless, inefficient people, the peasants are very light-hearted in all affairs not pertaining to their own household. The river, for instance, belongs to the community. The business man who wants to lease the right of fishing has to deal with the entire community assembled at a meeting. The way to get the lease is to offer the community a number of gallons of whiskey free of charge. Whichever of the competing parties gives the best "treat" secures the lease on the most favorable conditions. For a certain amount of liquor the community loses a hundred times its value.

At the same time the community cares little or nothing for its poor and destitute. If a family has become weaker and its working ability has decreased, the community decreases its share of land, which means ruin. If a family has lost its head and the remaining members are unable to work, the community takes away their share of land, leaving them to beggary and starvation. These manipula-

tions, coupled with a complete non-resistance to the moneyed peasants who mistreated their fellow-villagers in the most unscrupulous manner, resulted in the accumulation of two extreme groups at the two poles of the village: the village capitalists and the village propertyless proletariat.

"This carelessness, this lack of attention to his own interests will soon make it impossible for Ivan Ermolayevitch to live!" Uspenski exclaims in despair. "Ten years from now," he says, "the peasantry will be squeezed between the rich and the destitute and will have to pay the severest penalty for their negligence, indifference and stupid patience."

We have seen, in the preceding parts of this work, that Uspenski's prophecy came true.

## CHAPTER XXII

### "IN THE GRIP OF THE LAND"

THERE is one great love and one deep thought in the life of the peasant described by Uspenski. It is the love for the soil. This is the thought of all connected with the earth.

One must not think of this as an abstract, symbolic soil. No, the peasant knows no abstractions. "It is the same soil," Uspenski says, "which you bring home on your rubbers in the form of mud, it is the earth you see in your flower-pots, black, wet earth; it is, in a word, the most ordinary natural earth." The grip of this earth is over the peasant, over millions and millions of peasants. The earth is their mistress, stern, merciless, all-powerful, yet somehow inspiring love and affection.

The agricultural labor absorbing all the life-blood of Ivan Ermolayevitch, seemingly resulting only in food for himself, his family and his cattle, Uspenski says, represents infinitely more than just labor. Ivan Ermolayevitch is toiling with the utmost patience not only because he needs food and money to pay taxes, but because the agricultural labor, with all its ramifications, adaptations and contingencies, absorbs all his thoughts, all his mental and moral activities and even gives him satisfaction. In the field of agriculture, with all its emergencies and complications, his mind is free, his thought is vivid, his intelligence is very keen. The plow, the harrow, the cow, the sheep, the ducks, the chickens,—these are his world where he moves with perfect ease. He knows nothing about politics. He lays the changes of weather upon God. He lays the hazard of politics upon the Tzar. The Tzar wages war, the Tzar has liberated the serfs,

the Tzar grants land, the Tzar demands money. All this the peasant knows in an extremely vague manner, as in a haze. Yet when it comes to his own world he is omniscient, he knows every minute detail. Every sheep has its name, every calf is in his eyes endowed with an individual character; he does not sleep nights thinking of his geese; he is absorbingly interested in a stone.

The earth demands labor. In return she not only gives him joyous pantheistic feelings, she not only fills his life with interest and meaning, but she molds his opinions, determines his conceptions of the world in general, indicates to him what is right and what is wrong, relieves him from heavy burdens of responsibility and guides him in his family relations as well as in his social affairs.

The earth wants to be tilled. The earth ought not to lie idly around. Therefore it is only just that land should be redistributed according to the working capacity of every family. Theodor's family has grown stronger because his boy is now of working age or his colt has become a horse; therefore, he is entitled to more land. Mary's family has grown weaker, because she has married off her daughter or her cow has died; therefore Mary should receive less of the community-land. An energetic, industrious peasant is entitled to more land than a weak and lazy one. Such is the law of the earth.

The earth requires obedience. She teaches her people to submit to an unrestricted, absolutistic, incontrollable and incomprehensible power, wilful and soulless in its cruelty,—the power of nature. Ivan Ermolayevitch is used to patience, indeed. He toils on his field in the sweat of his brow, and nature destroys the results. He looks for rain day after day, and rain does not come; he hopes for fair weather to harvest his crops, and nature sends showers. The forces of nature make him a toy in their hands, and he does not revolt. Here is the dark cloud he has been looking for with beating heart. In it his happiness, his life, his well-being are centered. The

clouds are heaping up, growing, becoming darker. Ivan Ermolayevitch feels almost a physical craving for the water contained in those clouds. Now a wind is coming. It is thundering, lightning. The first heavy drops are falling. But—alas—the clouds have passed. The water has not come. The fields are dry as before. Nature is mocking, as it were. Nature is perfectly indifferent to Ivan Ermolayevitch's heart-desires. Ivan Ermolayevitch has to submit, to be patient, infinitely, invariably patient.

So he is.

On the other hand, the earth gives him the joy of command over others. Not only is he the absolute master of his cow, his horses, his hog, his chickens, but also of the human elements of his household. He allots to every member of the family his work, he demands from every one according to his strength, he makes the necessary purchases in town, he sells the products. In a word, he thinks for all and cares for all, and obedience to his orders seems to him as natural as his own obedience to the laws of nature. Here is his sister, a beautiful girl. For seven years the nicest boys of the village have wooed her. Yet she is unmarried, because her brother does not allow her to marry. Her brother cannot spare her from the household. Last year when the cattle plague was raging, he lost two horses, and the money provided for the wedding was spent to fill in the gap. This year he rented a few acres of land from the landlord and the working power of the girl is doubly needed to till the new land. She cannot marry. She has to wait, and patiently she does so. On the contrary, here is the youngest of three brothers. He was in love with a strong and good-looking girl, yet he had to marry a monster. Why? Because the mistress of the house is a wilful, quarrelsome old woman. The oldest brother's wife is a woman with a strong character, but she obeys the orders of her mother-in-law. The second brother's wife is rather an invalid and therefore submissive to the old woman as

well as to the oldest brother's wife, and so far there is peace in the family. The girl the youngest brother was wooing was of a strong, self-reliant character. She would probably have obeyed her mother-in-law, but she would never have tolerated the command of the younger women. This would have been a source of quarrels and endless dissatisfaction which would have had a bad effect on the work. Therefore it was decided that the boy must marry a monster who would not dare to raise her voice, and the boy gives up his beautiful, healthy, self-reliant sweetheart. He does not repine. Such is the law of the earth.

The earth has everything cut out for her people. She gives them moral ease, she takes upon herself every responsibility for their actions. A man in the grip of the earth *cannot* be guilty, Uspenski says. "This one has killed a man who has stolen his horse; yet he is not guilty, since no work can be done on the earth without a horse. This one's children have all died, yet he is not guilty, because there have been bad crops, the earth has not yielded the requisite amount of food, and the children have suffered starvation. This one has beaten his wife to death, and still he is not guilty, because his wife was a lazy, good-for-nothing woman who hampered his work and allowed the machinery of his household to fall to pieces." Whatever the peasant does, he *has* to do, being under the command of his mistress. He need not invent a life for himself, he need not look for interests or emotions. They are all *given* to him. When it is raining he *has* to sit home, when the weather is fair he *has* to reap, mow, etc. Never responsible, never innovating, always obeying, the man *lives,* and this seemingly aimless process is an end in itself.

"Why does this oak-tree grow? What benefit does it derive from drawing the sap of the earth for a hundred years? Of what advantage is it for the tree to cloak itself with leaves, then to lose them and finally to feed the pigs with its acorns? The benefit and the advantage

of all this for the oak-tree consist just in the fact that it grows, that it becomes green, that it simply lives. The life of the peasant is not very different from the life of the tree."

There had been a time when this natural " tree-like " life was in a state of perfect equilibrium. At the time when Uspenski was making his studies, however, the village-life was already unstable, every emergency causing the individual household to collapse. The " natural," " tree-like " peasant was working for a modern market, exchanging the products of his land for money, purchasing for his money cotton-goods and iron-implements and other industrial products and paying taxes to support an enormous administrative machine. Ivan Ermolayevitch was unconsciously drawn into the current of modern exchange. Ivan Ermolayevitch's wants were growing almost against his will. He could not meet his obligations unless he increased the output of his land. He could not increase the output, however, unless he stopped living a " tree-like " life and resorted to methods of improved agriculture. This being out of the question owing to his lack of knowledge, initiative and freedom, being rendered quite impossible besides by the communal ownership on land, our Ivan Ermolayevitch has developed an inordinate greed for money—and for land.

His greed for money is overwhelming. Somehow or other, money has been easily acquired by some of his neighbors. One of them had gone to the capital, where he became a driver. Another had been working at the nearby railroad station and had earned money. A third happened to become connected with a " gentleman " from the city who used to throw his money to the dogs. People have contrived to become prosperous. Their example sets Ivan Ermolayevitch's brain aflame. He is ready to do anything for cash. No moral barrier can stop him in his pursuit of " easy money." Honesty, self-respect, fear

of God, fear of sin, all considerations directing his relations with his fellow-peasants and the earth are put aside when our Ivan Ermolayevitch comes in contact with city folk and ways of money-making outside of agriculture. He is beside himself. He is appalling. He abhors his neighbors who remain bound to the glebe. He is loath to help his brother in need. He surpasses in greed and unscrupulousness the worst sharks of the city. He is like a savage thrown into the midst of a civilized world remaining utterly alien to this world. *He must have money.* Nothing else matters.

Still, the average peasant hates to leave his earth. He is too deeply rooted in the agricultural surroundings. Ivan Afanasyev, another representative of the village depicted by Uspenski, is an example of a "real peasant" in the best sense of the word. He is indissolubly attached to the earth. For him, the earth is the real fosterer, the only source of joy and sorrow, happiness and misfortune, the subject of prayers and thanksgivings. The agricultural work, agricultural cares and interests form the entire substance of Ivan Afanasyev's mental world to the exclusion of any other thought. Ivan Afanasyev would never dream of leaving his "mother earth," and looking for other occupations. He is in love with the earth, he is more than that. *He is one with her,* there is a bond of mutual welfare and mutual truthfulness between him and his mistress. "But—alas—" Uspenski says, "a time has come when nobody cares for Ivan's relations to the earth, for their purity and beauty; nobody thinks of the fact that those relations form the foundation of all the Russian peasantry, the source of its vigor. 'Money! Where is your money!' is the imperative demand of the new times. 'How can I leave the earth! Have mercy with me, how is it possible for the earth to be deserted? We all *live* on the earth,' Ivan Afanasyev replies. But the new times are merciless. 'Money! Money' is their incessant clamor." And Ivan Afanasyev abandons his

beautiful honest relation to the earth and begins to look for "easy money."

Such cases, however, are the exceptions. The bulk of the peasantry are compelled to remain on the earth and to make a living from agricultural labor. Easy money is, after all, a mere chance, while the earth is the foundation of life. The craving for earth is, therefore, one of the most characteristic features of the peasant's psychology. Give him double the area of land he is holding now, and our Ivan Ermolayevitch or Ivan Afanasyev will be happy. Do not talk to him of a system of rotation of crops,—he could not try it under communal ownership even if he were prepared to do so. Do not talk to him of co-operative manufacturing of dairy products or vegetables for the city market,—he has no money and no technical experience for such undertakings, and he will not understand you. Do not try to argue that the area of land is limited and that even if his share of land could be increased momentarily, the growth of the family would make the situation hopeless in a few years,—our peasant will not be convinced. Ivan Ermolayevitch and Ivan Afanasyev are not used to abstract thinking. They cannot and do not want to look into the future. Political problems of a broader aspect are foreign to them. They do not even think of the peasantry as a whole. What they are concerned with is their community or, at the utmost, a small number of neighboring communities. Those communities, our peasant knows firmly and unshakably, could be improved by an increase in their land possessions. This *he sees*. This is fixed in his very blood by his agricultural work and agricultural conception of the world. It is a truth as clear as daylight.

Whence could the land come? Our peasant lives in constant expectation of a miracle. He does not understand the fabric of modern society. He has no idea of the complexities of economic problems. He has no general view of the life of his country. The whole world of

social relations he lives in appears to him a great mysterious thicket full of shadows, traps, ghosts and, very seldom, favorable spirits. Out of this thicket, he hopes, sooner or later a great radiant power will emerge to lead him into the haven of peasants' happiness,—the full possession of the entire land.

Who will this great liberator be? Will it be a Tzar? Will it be a saint? Will it be God himself? The peasant does not know. He does not question. It is his creed. Possibly he would not be able to live without it.

On winter evenings the peasants gather in one of the houses to listen to the Bible. In the streets the wind wails and the snow threatens to bury the little cabins. In the house the tiny lamp vainly struggles against the shadows creeping from every corner. Heavy, awkward figures fill the small space. Brown, sunburnt faces lean over scrawny, sinewy hands. One of the old men reads the Holy Scriptures, and invariably the interpretation centers around the increase of land. "Listening to the village interpreters of the Bible," Uspenski says, "you gain the impression that the Book was written only to show the peasants that "a king will come and give them land." The abstruse and hazy text of the Apocalypse, zealously read by those of the villagers who know how to read, becomes unexpectedly clear and comprehensible in their interpretation. It appears that the entire book was written to show that there will be enough land. Wherever you meet the words "united" or "I have united" or "they shall become united," there is no doubt that the text refers to land. "They shall become united," —the interpreter reads, "of course it means *that;* don't you know? We have lost our land, and we have lost the ravine and the woods; therefore it is written, 'They shall come back' and 'They shall become united'; that means the land will return to us."

"Is there any indication that we shall have to lose them first?"

"Of course there is! Here" . . .

And soon the reader finds a sentence containing the words, "I shall destroy," "I shall dissolve" and another sentence after it saying, "I shall unite."

"That's it: first they take it away, then they'll give it back."

"There are in 'Revelation' indications of a purely local character," Uspenski says. "For instance, the land of one of the villages had been divided into three parts while the land of another had been distributed between two new owners.* Each of those villages discovers in the Apocalypse references to its specific land situation. The first finds something like, 'Three in one,' the other is glad to see a promise in 'The two shall become united.' Each village believes in those revelations with deep reverence and devotion. In the course of a conversation with one of the interpreters, I asked him:

"'Will they take away my land, too, *when the time is ripe?*'

"'How much land have you?'

"'One dessatin.'

"The man meditated for a while, then he questioned me carefully as to where and how I had purchased the land, and after further deliberation answered:

"'When the time is ripe you are entitled to more.'

"Then he mused for a while and finally added:

"'When the time is ripe you must receive fourteen dessatin.'

"All this he had found in the Holy Scriptures. Even the number of fifteen dessatin to be allotted to every person, it appears, was contained in 'Revelation.' The interpreter promised to show me the verse where it was written."

"Imagine this gray-haired peasant, fatigued from labor," Uspenski adds, "imagine that each word of his

*The author speaks of the land the peasants had lost in 1861, when serfdom was abolished. See above, Chapters III and IV.

interpretation is spoken with profound reverence and accepted with similar faith, and you will be impressed with the passionate longing for land experienced by the peasants. They need it not only as their daily bread, but as the foundation of the bright future they cherish in their imagination." *

Twenty years after Uspenski had made his studies of peasant life, a press correspondent described a dispute he had witnessed in one of the villages in the time of the revolution. The dispute took place between the local priest and one of the peasants. The priest was defending law and property on land, the peasant was in favor of the formula, "The land belongs to the people." His arguments he based solely on the Bible.

"The prophet Ezekiel," the peasant said, "declared that it was the will of God that the land should be divided among the people equally and by lot. Chapter 47, verses 21, 22, 23 read: 'So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you.' Even the Tzars are not allowed to have unlimited land. Ezekiel, Chapter 46, verse 8, says: 'In the land shall be his possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people: and the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.'"

"That was long ago," the priest replied.

"What does it matter," the peasant answered. "The laws of God are eternal and unshakable from everlasting to everlasting. Also in Leviticus, Chapter 25, verse 23, it is said: 'The land shall not be sold forever: for the land is mine.' God does not want the land to be sold, only to be rented."

* All quotations of Chapters XXI and XXII are taken from Uspenski: "Village Diary," "Peasant and Peasant Labor," "The Power of the Earth," "Talks with a Friend," all collected in Vols. IV and V of his complete works, edition 1908.

"Well, what does it prove?"

"It proves that nobody is allowed to acquire property in land, and that whoever suffers land to be purchased or received in private property as a gift, violates the laws of God and is equal to a worshiper of idols."

The peasant looked round the audience, then added:

"'Woe to them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there is no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth,' says the prophet Isaiah."

This agricultural interpreter of the Bible was by no means an exception among his fellow-peasants. Rural Russia was "in the grip of the earth." "Mother earth," they believed, could not deceive her people. Sooner or later she must come and press them all to her bosom and give them happiness and freedom.

By M. Nesterov.

"Holy Russia"

# CHAPTER XXIII

## "THE BURNING FOREST"

At the beginning of the revolution, the Russian peasantry were far less homogeneous than they had been in Uspenski's time. Fluctuations of the village population from village to town and vice versa, economic and social differentiations within the village itself had wrought deep changes in the fabric of rural life. New types had made their appearance. New visions stirred the gloomy air. Here is the peasant who goes away every summer to serve as a farm hand in distant provinces, leaving his own land in the care of his wife and half-grown children, and who, wandering from railway station to railway station, from inn to inn, from one rural district to another, meets all sorts of people and hears all sorts of conversations, till his horizon necessarily broadens. Here is the peasant who has worked for a time in the large city, serving as a horse driver or wood-chopper or janitor, and who brings back with him to his native village new ideas of comfort, respectability and personal freedom. Here is the new *peasant-reader* who takes out books from the little school-library, adding to their ideas from his own innate intelligence, interpreting them in a most surprising manner and coming to very radical conclusions. Here is the revolutionary workingman who has participated in a labor organization in one of the industrial centers, reading revolutionary literature, listening to revolutionary speeches, perhaps himself doing revolutionary work, and who, for partaking in a labor strike, has been banished by the authorities to his native village. All these members of the rural community do the work of enlightening their neighbors. The public school, meager as is its

course of teaching, does its share in civilizing and modernizing the younger generations. Time and again a "real" revolutionary agitator, sent by the Social-Revolutionary or Social-Democratic Party, would succeed in establishing connections with some of the peasants, furnishing them with literature, sometimes even conducting a strike against the local landlord.

Still, there is only one way in which the new conceptions are refracted in the peasants' brains: this is in the relation to the land. As the organs of the human senses react each in its particular way, so that the eye, for instance, always gives the sensations of light notwithstanding the kind of irritation the eye-nerve receives,—so the peasant's mind always reacts in a hope for land notwithstanding the kind of ideas with which it becomes familiar. The peasant may agree with the agitator that civic oppression is bad, but he thinks that lack of land is worse; he may hate the chief of police who collects the outstanding taxes, he may despise the Zemski Natchalnik and his superiors, but he hates and despises the landlord more, though the latter may be a liberal and well-meaning man.

This specific clinging to the earth is a characteristic feature of all Russian literature dealing with the peasant in the time of the revolution. A. Seraphimovitch in a story called *At Midnight,* describes a gathering of workingmen and peasants. The workingmen are employed in the factories of a great southern town. The peasants are engaged in the construction of a turnpike through the mountains not far from the town. The workingmen call a secret meeting in the mountains in order to talk to the peasants about the necessity of improving the condition of their lives. In a log-house high up in the heart of the mountains the two groups meet. The workingmen are neatly dressed, their manners are free, their speech comparatively fluent. The peasants are grave, awkward, rugged, silent, full of elemental power; their speech is rude, their clothes are shabby.

One of the workingmen makes an address. He is not an experienced orator; he is sometimes confused in his expression. Yet he spices his speech with words like "the economic production of capitalism," "bourgeois order," "industrial crises," "exploitation" and "workers of all the countries, unite." All those new words, new conceptions, the author says, entered the gray, encumbered life of the workingman as something big, luminous, radiant, full of joyous promise. He lives a boresome, monotonous life, but above its irksome everyday toil and hardship hovers something like a morning sun, screening with its glory the cruel reality, shines the tremendous hope of an all-embracing happiness—the coming emancipation.

Another more popular speaker takes the floor. The peasants listen attentively. He speaks of the necessity of political freedom, illustrating his program by the very life of the peasants gathered at the meeting. Have they not been forbidden to assemble openly to discuss their situation? Have they not been compelled to make the perilous trip to the mountains in night time to listen to a word of truth? "What do the working people need?" the speaker asks emphatically.

And from the midst of the gloomy peasant crowd a voice answers:

"Land."

And the walls of the cabin reverberate with passionate cries:

"Land! Land!"

"An increase in the shares of land."

"The earth is our mother." . . .

"She nourishes all."

"There is no life without her."

"What are we without land! Destitute creatures! Vagrants!"

"We do not see our families. We wander like Cain over distant regions."

The effect surprises the agitators. They are angry, their eyes flash fire. They answer in deep scorn: "Can you bite your earth? Can you work her with your bare hands?" But louder than reason, more passionate than any love of truth sounds the cry of the peasants: "Land!"

"Mother-earth is good for all men . . . she creates all . . . she provides for all . . . she will give happiness to all. . . ."

The owner of the log-cabin says with a grave accent:

"For ten years I have been toiling here. In winter the snow buries my house, I do not hear a human voice, I do not see a human face. What has it all been for? I have hoped to save some money to buy land. . . . As you know your own children, so I knew every copeck, each one covered with sweat, with blood, with pain. . . . I have hoped all the time, day and night: Land! Four dessatin at least . . . all for myself. . . . Our earth! . . . O great God! . . ."

The love for the earth drowns all other considerations. Far across their native steppes the peasants send their land-psalm from the top of the southern mountain.

"Land! Land!"

At the time of the revolution this age-old longing turned into a desire for immediate action. The peasants became impatient. The time had become ripe, it seemed to them; their happiness was within reach of their hand.

This call of the time is very vividly depicted in a story by Skitaletz, *The Burning Forest.* Miron, the hero of the story, is perhaps the most enlightened type the village had produced. He reads books. He has connections with revolutionary organizations. He has organized a group of young peasants who are entirely under his influence. He even tries to understand the differences of opinion between the warring factions in the ranks of the revolutionists. He looks more like a student than a real peasant.

"He resembled a student of peasant parents," the author says. "He was a strong fellow of twenty-seven, blond, with a small light mustache, with a handsome sunburnt face. His gray eyes sparkled with cleverness, cunning and gladness. Such faces can be seen among poor students and among some of the workingmen. He wore his hair closely cropped; his attire consisted of a workman's blouse and high boots. Yet, resembling a student, he remained a Mujik: strong, sinewy, succulent, very much like a carrot just drawn from the ground. He was all saturated with the odor of sunshine and fields."

The Mujik-quality marks Miron not only in his physical appearance, but also in his mental make-up. He is a man capable of thinking. He is far superior to the local school-teacher whom he tries to make a member of his secret organization. The teacher is surprised to learn that Miron has read books he himself has never heard of. He has to admit that this man whom he had at first treated as an ordinary peasant has a better political education and a stronger grip on social problems than himself. The teacher, the professional "intellectual," looks up with envy to the strong, self-assured Mujik who seems to have found a great stirring truth. Yet, at the same time, Miron is essentially and basically a peasant.

"Look here, isn't this beautiful?" he says to the teacher, pointing at the woods burning on the other side of the Volga.

"What's the beauty?" the teacher replies.

"The forest is aflame! The government's forest! You just climb the hill up there and take a look: the fire is surging near and far! The smoke is rising over the Volga in tremendous pillars! Yes, these are times! Things are going on, brother!"

"Why does it burn?" the teacher grumbles.

Miron exclaims in ecstasy:

"Why, it's the peasants who set the forest aflame!

Don't you know that? The guards have already given up the struggle against the fire; it is ridiculous; no sooner do they quench it at one place than a new fire is raging at another. No, brother! You cannot fight against the people! Everything will be burned down!"

"Is that so?" the teacher wonders.

A new spark kindles Miron's eyes. He is overflowing with strong emotion.

"The people have moved!" he exclaims. "The entire people are in motion. Have you heard what is going on across the river? In Vassilyevo they have declared a rent strike, they want to pay only five rubles instead of eleven for a dessatin. In other villages they don't pay at all. Give us the land free of charge, they say, because it is ours, it is peasants' land!"

Miron energetically shakes his head, smites himself on his knee, and continues with shining eyes:

"And what do you say to that? They gave them the land free! Oho!"

Miron is all radiant with malicious peasant joy. The spacious blouse is full of his vigorous muscular body, and through it one can see his broad chest heaving.

The teacher is overwhelmed. He becomes silent. But now Miron has touched the most vital chord in his heart. He cannot restrain himself.

"Those Democrats!" he exclaims with deep scorn. "They are just talking. Some say one thing, others just the opposite," he turns his palm first in one direction, then in another. "And all the time they are debating among themselves!"

He shrugs his shoulders, spreads his arms out, then continues with a grave expression on his face:

"It is not up to us to decide who's right. We, Mujiks, know only one thing: Land! First give us land, then go on debating. First increase to each his share of land, then we'll see, perhaps we'll be able to find a way through your illegal literature!"

Miron is not very firm in pronouncing such "intellectual" words as "illegal literature," yet he fires away triumphantly.

"And if you won't give, we'll take the land ourselves," he adds with a proud air.

"When he spoke of the earth," the author says, "his face underwent a peculiar transformation; it assumed an inspired, poetic expression, and his low voice glowed in warm tones. One could feel a powerful thirst and a tender love for the earth. It was as if he had compressed something momentous which he hid in his breast and which only the word 'earth' could stir."

"Is it possible?" the teacher asks. "Can the people win?"

And full of prophetic ardor is Miron's voice as he answers:

"Yes! The people will win! Truth will be triumphant!"

Miron is overcome by emotion, his eyes are wet with tears, he almost whispers when he declares with a trembling voice:

"The great hour has struck!"

Miron and his associates of the secret organization have no time for meditation. "The forests are burning." The peasants are refusing to pay rent. The peasants are plowing the fields belonging to the noble masters. The peasants are attacking the Cossacks and soldiers sent to protect the landlords' mansions. Can one wait any longer? Can one listen to the voice of moderation? Can one be cautious?

The necessity of caution and moderation and wise preparation for the final blow is emphasized by an old intellectual agitator, Michaylo Vasilyitch, the local agriculturist. For fifteen years he has been trying to spread among the peasants the seeds of political dissatisfaction. For fifteen years he has been conducting his work, gradually, with the utmost patience, with infinite precaution.

He has brought up a new generation that cherishes the ideas of humanity, of freedom, of happiness for all. He loves his " boys " as a father loves his own children. But now the children have become rebellious against their father. He is too slow. He does not lead them to the battle. Under the leadership of young Miron they assemble to " hold a court " over Michaylo Vasilyitch.

It is a beautiful evening. A light breeze is playing in the slender birch-trees, limes and elms. From the hillside where the peasants are assembled, a broad view opens on the Volga, on the mountains looming near the opposite bank, on peaceful valleys bathing in the last caressing glow of the sun. The landscape is veiled in a light mist of sadness. The giant river cradles on its breast the thin creeping shadows. Everything is full of rest, tenderness, love. But the people are restless. The people are deeply stirred.

Miron is the chief speaker. His words are full of accusation.

" We have been patient," he says, and his voice rings like a clarion call. " We have waited for hundreds of years. When we asked for truth, they punished us, they flogged us, they put us in prison. We were patient, there was no end to our endurance. Cursed be it, the peasants' endurance! In bloody tears we have bathed this stony ground, with our very bones we have manured it. Yet—we were patient. . . . Then you came. You talked of truth. You taught us to stand for truth, to sacrifice everything for it, even our wives, our fathers and mothers. We have followed you. This was not easy. The nights we were spending with you our wives were suffering tortures, knowing nothing about the reasons for our absence, suspecting us of unfaithfulness, crying. Our fathers were constantly fighting with us for God, for the church, for fast-days. Our families were full of quarrels, mistrust, discontent. Yet we were following you, because your words were like a new religion for which we were ready

to endure privation. Now the time has come. Our patience is exhausted. We have come to you and told you: 'Lead us! Tell us what to do, we are ready.' But you do not lead us and you do not let us alone, either. You stand in our way. You are unable to put your own words into practice. It seems to us that your soul is full of mortal fright. Well, we don't blame you. We only ask you for God's sake: step aside, take your rest, let us act according to our wishes. The time of whispering in the backyards has gone. We must speak aloud! The time has come for us all to go and take our peasant-happiness with our own hands."

The assembled peasants echo Miron's sentiment by exclaiming:

"True! It's true!"

"It's time you tendered your resignation."

"We revoke our mandate!"

"Go away! It's impossible to work with you!"

Deeply moved is Michaylo Vasilyitch when he answers:

"Yes, I cannot rise with you, because you rise in an elemental fashion. You set woods on fire, you openly seize land, you are going to attack the estates of the landlords. I don't care for the woods, I don't care for the landlords, I care for you: you will be slaughtered by the Cossacks, you will be killed, you will be put into prison! My work will be ruined; all that I was building for fifteen years will go to pieces. If this is why you drive me away, I shall be frank: I shall not lead you, I shall try to stop you on this way as long as victory is not secured. . . . I am not a coward. Perhaps there will come a time when I'll prove with my death that I was not afraid of death. I only beg of you not to try to face the bullets, to be careful. . . . You are the intellectuals among the peasants, you are few in number. You will be slaughtered by your own fellow-villagers who are not enlightened." . . .

Vain are all these appeals to reason. The call of the

earth is stronger. Michaylo Vasilyitch is obliged to quit. Young Miron is elected leader.

What are his "intellectual" friends going to do under his leadership? Of this the rural tragedies of 1905-06 tell an eloquent tale. Russian literature bristles with stories of conflicts between landlords and peasants, of burning estates, of flogged peasants, of outraged peasant women, of blood and misery and despair.

Here is one of a great flood of stories. It is written by Mouijel, a man who knows the village thoroughly and who is endowed with a strong sense of reality. The name of the story is *Rent*.

The peasants of a certain village decide to rent no longer a piece of land belonging to the landlord Laptyev. The land has been rented by the village for generations, but owing to constant increase in rent and to the general unrest, the peasants refuse to renew the contract, though they face starvation without it. Laptyev hires laborers from a distant village to plow the piece of land. One morning these laborers find their plows and other implements thrown into the swamp. Laptyev, suspecting the dissatisfied peasants, sends to the authorities an appeal for protection. A squad of Cossacks appears in the village. The Cossacks are placed in the houses of the peasants; where the houses are too small, the peasants with their families have to move to the barn or the shed. The Cossacks drink whisky and carouse and in various ways abuse the peasants. Abraham, the leader of the rent-strike and one of the most enlightened villagers, is simply choking with hate. He is poor. He is miserable. He has suffered all his life. He is determined to revenge himself. One dark night a band of peasants attack the Cossacks. A terrible slaughter follows. The Cossacks are infuriated. They strike with their sabers, they trample the peasants under the hoofs of their horses. Many Cossacks invade the homes of the peasants, outraging young and old women in the presence of their mothers

and children. In the turmoil, Abraham encounters a Cossack officer whom he deals a terrific blow with a club. Then he flees to the woods. In the dark of the following night he steals himself to his family, only to find that his wife has been outraged. He spends a few hours at home, but he cannot stay, as he is being sought for assaulting the officer. With the first rays of dawn he is on his way back to the woods, but a Cossack crosses his path. He attacks the Cossack. In blind despair he crushes the skull of his foe and flees. The Cossack is dead. Abraham is an outlaw. A few days later he is caught, put in irons and brought before the court-martial.

Abraham will die. Nothing can save him. But nothing can save the landlord, either. The eldest of the community, a patriarch, a deeply religious man, a constant reader of Ecclesiastes and an ex-soldier under Nicholas I, decides to kill Laptyev. He takes his old rifle and disappears. The woods are all searched, but he cannot be discovered. He is obliged to deal justice. If he falls into the hands of his enemies, another villager will take his place and his task. "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth" is the law of the revolting village.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### TRAGIC ATTACKS

THE peasant drinks "brick-tea" (tea pressed in the form of cakes), while the landlord drinks fragrant "regular" tea. The peasant takes a bite of sugar with his tea, using one lump for seven or eight cups, while the landlord puts two or three lumps into each cup. The peasant smokes canister-tobacco whose smoke is suffocating and poisonous, while the landlord uses "soft and tender tobacco with a mild odor." The peasant wears a heavy old sheepskin coat, while the landlord wears furs "as light as a feather" and so soft that you love to caress them. The peasant is glad when he has meat for his Sunday meal, confining himself on week-days to rye bread and "empty shchi" (sour-cabbage soup without meat), sometimes to bran-flour bread and onions, while the landlord has a meal of three courses every day with ice cream or waffles in addition. The peasant goes to bed with sunset and gets up with sunrise, saving kerosene and clothes, while the landlord has guests in the evening, music plays, and merry people dance till late into the night. The peasant is so hardened that he does not cry even when his beloved son dies, while the landlord's wife, a tender-hearted creature, sheds bitter tears over the death of her riding horse. And in general, they are such a queer lot, those people of the mansion. The women wear ridiculous structures on their heads, something similar to a bird's nest and a shed roof; the girls ride on horseback in trousers, like men (what a shame!) and altogether they do nothing but eat and read books and have pleasure.

The peasants feel superior to those good-for-nothing weak folk, and they sincerely wonder why the world needs these lazy, wicked and greedy consumers of all the good things. Just imagine: the landlord and his family always sit in cushioned chairs, while the peasant never has a chance even to try how it feels to rest in one. And whence did the "noble squire" get his comforts if not from the work of the peasants in his fields? Yet those fields are not his at all, and the whole lot are simply a cluster of parasites on the back of the "people."

This is the attitude of the village to the landlord in Evgeni Tchirikov's *Mujiks,* a four-act play reproducing with photographic accuracy a state of affairs which must necessarily have culminated in disaster. The landlord's house is perhaps no more comfortable than the house of a prosperous American farmer. His standard of living is far from luxurious. Yet, compared with the life of the average Mujik, his life seems exceedingly opulent. The pathetic feature of the situation is that the landlord himself is a liberal man, a leader of the progressives in the Zemstov. He is whole-heartedly in favor of political and social reforms which would improve the situation of the peasantry, yet he can by no means give up his landed estates. As a matter of fact, he is far from successful in his agricultural enterprise: his debts are heavy, the income does not suffice to cover running expenses. Sometimes he gets tired of the strain; on such occasions he declares he would be happy to give up everything, land, worries, peasants' dissatisfaction and all. His property, however, will not let him go, and with set teeth he continues to do the troublesome work. There is a meadow which the peasants of his village used to rent for communal pasturage. He would have greatly preferred the peasants as tenants could they have afforded to pay the rent in advance. This, however, being out of the question, he is compelled to rent the meadow to a town capitalist who advances him a considerable sum of money.

He cannot help it. He feels sympathy with the peasants whose cattle are doomed to starvation, but imperative economic necessity is above personal feelings.

The peasants do not take all this into consideration. They do not even distinguish between a liberal and a reactionary landlord. They live in a strange world of rumors, dreams, visions and restless expectations. A horse driver has come from the town telling about a "manifesto." In the inn, he says, people have read a paper which declared the landlords had no right to own the land. An old man has heard that in Petersburg the authorities are elaborating plans as to how much land each peasant should be granted. The old man thinks it only proper. "In the Bible," he says, "God blessed the people and gave them 'every herb bearing seed which is on the face of the earth,' and here the people have no bread: this is unjust." There is a rumor that the heir of the throne wanders over the country disguised as a private man, in order to learn from the people, not from the Tchinovnicks, what their need is. He is much grieved to see the misery of the people, and soon a new law will be issued which will put an end to sufferings and privation. The peasants put their heads together and tell each other in a whisper that the heir of the throne sheds bitter tears over the lot of the people, that the Tchinovnicks are very much disquieted and that they put into prison every one who has talked with the Tzarevitch. A peasant girl has even seen the Tzarevitch while picking mushrooms in the woods: he wore a peasant cloak over a uniform with shining buttons and spoke to her tenderly, asking her whether she was tired and how much land each family was holding.

The peasants are all astir. The Zemski Natchalnik summons some representatives of the village to listen to a paper received from the governor. It is nothing unusual in the life of the peasants; but this time they are full of joyous anticipation. They are ready to ring the

big church bell, to hold a solemn service in celebration of the great news. That the "paper" contains the long-looked-for improvements, nobody doubts for a second. "Everybody will receive aid from the government, either seeds, or cash, as they choose," one of the Mujiks says. "They will give horses, too," another remarks, "because there's no use having land when you can't plow it." "The Zemski Natchalnick has orders to purchase one million of grain," a third joins in. "They went to Odesta to buy millions of grain! So it is written in the papers." Everybody has heard about the Tzar's manifesto which had been suppressed by the Tchinovnicks and hidden from the people. Yet the people by this time know the truth. The people will have their way. No use deceiving them any longer.

The peasants live in a state of exaltation. Everything points to the fulfilment of their heart's desire; everything is a good omen. There is the landlord's nephew who has just returned from Siberia, from political exile. He is the owner of a landed estate, which he intends to rent to the community at a nominal price. He does not feel like working the land himself and he does not look for a large income; he therefore wishes to return part of the rent to the community, to be used for the building of a school, a public bath or some other public institution. The peasants have all the advantage, yet they refuse to conclude the contract. "Why," the shrewd among them declare, "those gentlemen only want to cheat you: they know very well that they will soon be compelled to give up their land entirely free of charge, therefore they are eager to get now as much as they can." The peasants believe it is a trap, and flatly refuse the transaction.

Poverty (there are 47.3 horses to each 100 families in the county), famine (the hungry babies are being fed by the landlord's wife, which is a source of annoyance to her and to the peasants), diseases, ruthless administra-

tion, peasants' envy for the landlord, coupled with all those dark rumors and expectations, necessarily end in collisions.

The peasants cut wood in the landlord's forest. They attack and kill the landlord's manager, who has been very cruel. A crude home-made proclamation is attached to one of the trees, saying, " This estate will be burned." A passer-by remarks to the landlord's kitchen help: " Wait for guests, they will soon be here." The landlord's house is full of fear. Something mysterious holds the family in its spell. Nothing serious has happened as yet, but everybody feels the dreadful " something " in the air. The nerves are tense.

On a dark evening the catastrophe comes,—fire and murder and ruined lives. The ex-revolutionist, who wanted to " get square " with the people by renting them his land on the most favorable conditions, is killed as an enemy of the people.

Just *how* the work of " expropriation " is done, we can see from the proceedings of the court where 167 peasants of the Dmitrievsk county, province of Oryol, were tried for looting and burning the estates of Nikola Tereshchenko, on February 22, 1905. The act of indictment reads in part:

In the middle of February, 1905, there were disturbances and revolts among the peasants of Dmitrievsk and Syevsk counties, province of Oryol, and the adjoining Gluchov county, province of Tchernigov. The peasants of the village Salnoye had been committing violent acts against the landlord Popov for the preceeding two years: they had cut trees in his woods, feeding their cattle on his fields and lawlessly seizing parts of his land. On February 10th, a proclamation was discovered in the village Salnoye bearing the headline: " Brother Peasants." The proclamation was attached to the pole of the draw-well. It contained an appeal to the peasants to rise as one man and overthrow the rule of the landlords and Tchinovnicks

who live on the people's toil. The peasants gathered around the proclamation, which they read with visible pleasure, not allowing any one to tear it down. Opinions were expressed amongst the crowd that soon everything would belong to them, the fields, the meadows, the woods. According to one of the witnesses, the peasants were convinced the proclamation came from high authorities and therefore deserved to be trusted. Three days later, the peasants of that village openly robbed the grain of Tchernichin's estate, two versts distant from the village.

Similar acts of violence took place between February 13th and 21st in many other villages of the same three counties. In the night of February 22nd, Tereshchenko's estate, adjoining the village Khinel, was looted. Simultaneously it became known that the Nikolski estate and the Michaylovski estate, belonging to the same Nikola Tereshchenko, were to be attacked in the near future. The manager of the sugar refinery in the Michaylovski estate, informed of the impending calamity, fled from the place on the morning of February 22nd, taking with him what cash there was and other valuables also. Many officers of the refinery, panic-stricken, followed his example. Nevertheless the work of the refinery, where 600 workingmen were employed, was not discontinued.

On the morning of February 22nd, the reeve of Khinel village ordered the peasants of his village, personally and through his assistants, to go to the Michaylovski estate, twenty versts from Khinel, and make a pogrom. His order, he said, was based on a "paper" he had in his possession; those who disobeyed he threatened with punishment. The peasants equipped their wagons, 500 in number, took their wives and children and went to the Michaylovski estate. The majority were intoxicated, having a store of whisky from the distillery they had looted on the preceding night on the Khinel estate. Passing three villages on their way to Michaylovski they invited the peasants to join them, threatening to burn the

villages on their way back in case of refusal. Many peasants joined. Further on towards Michaylovski they set fire to a barn by the wayside, and still further they burned three brick-drying sheds. About seven in the evening they approached Michaylovski.

The first man to meet the invaders in the streets of Michaylovski was an employee of the sugar-refinery. Asked what they had come for, the peasants answered frankly: "Don't you see? We have come to rob." Part of the wagons, numbering about 300, turned in to the Nikolski estate, where the peasants opened six large barns containing 16.000 pood of foodstuffs and began to carry away the grain, the flour, the cereals and the bran, while the other wagons continued their way to the sugar-works. The procession was headed by 200 wagons from Khinel, while a number of others, amounting to nearly 800, followed. The wagons proceeded three and four in a row, each wagon carrying two or three persons. The peasants were armed with axes, crowbars and clubs.

To the first houses, belonging to the sugar-works, the peasants did little harm, breaking only a few windows. Further on they looted the house of the factory physician. The crowd was about to enter the house of one of the employees, Alfimov, but this man begged to be spared, since he was very poor. One of the crowd went into the house to ascertain whether the man spoke the truth, whereupon he shouted to his comrades, "Brothers, don't touch this house!" The house remained intact. The wagons proceeded. Later, a horn sounded, and the work of destruction began.

The houses of the general manager and many other officers of the works were robbed and then set on fire. Some of the peasants broke into the storehouses, taking away the sugar, the flour and the cereals, and also a few horses; others approached the factory, breaking its locks and doors, smashing its windows, loading the wagons with sugar and other property that they could take hold of and

By N. V. Pirogov.

"Away with the Landlords!"
Peasants out for looting the rich landed estates

finally setting the buildings on fire. Soon the offices, the storehouses, the factory building were all aflame. The fire spread to many other buildings. The crowd covered the whole estate, robbing and burning. In various places new fires were started by the marauders. The teacher's house was burned down. Many houses of employees were ruined. Part of the crowd found its way into a court-yard where barrels of sugar were heaped up on wooden floorings. The barrels were all taken away and the floorings set on fire. The crowd, however, did not touch the sugar stored at the railway station, having been assured that it belonged to the railroad and was to be sent to the army. Nor was the post- and telegraph-office damaged by the crowd, although the other half of the same building, occupied by a factory officer, was looted and its windows smashed.

An hour after the beginning of the robbery, wagons laden with all sorts of goods were leaving the Michaylovski estate, while other wagons carrying peasants from the neighboring villages who had been attracted by the fire, were entering the factory premises. The newcomers also took part in the robbing and burning, the orgy continuing till six in the morning. Besides owners of wagons, there were many peasants on foot carrying goods on their shoulders or rolling sugar-barrels along the tracks of the railroad. The damages amounted to over two millions of rubles.

So far the indictment-act. The court proceedings disclosed many illuminating details. The ages of those indicted ranged from eighteen to seventy; of the 167 in the prisoners' dock hardly five knew how to read or write. Why it so happened that out of many thousand participants in the tragic attack on Michaylovski estate only 167 were picked out, remained a puzzle to the public as well as to the indicted. At any rate, they did not feel guilty. Previous to the attack on Michaylovski, while robbing another estate belonging to the same millionaire,

Tereshchenko, one of the crowd, said: "As things are, the gentlemen make it hard for you and for us. Just let them move away, then the whole earth will belong to us; in the spring we will plow and then we will harvest the entire land." In Michaylovski, when asked why they were not only robbing but also burning, some peasants answered that they had no use for the sugar factory, not knowing how to run it; their main object, they said, was land. A peasant woman, asked where she came from and what she was doing, readily answered: "I am from Khinel, my friend. I have come to rob the gentlemen by order of our Little Father the Tzar, who has sent us a paper with a crown."

In the course of the robbing the peasants maintained a friendly attitude towards outsiders. There were no assaults on persons. The hospital was left intact. When resistance was offered, the invaders did not try to enter private houses. There was something naïve and childish in the behavior of those big, uncouth, intoxicated Mujiks. A woman was carrying a piece of furniture on a wagon. "For what do you need this arm-chair?" she was asked by the superintendent of the hospital. "Why," she answered, "I want to use it. The gentlefolks have had it enough, now it's our turn to enjoy things." The woman told the superintendent she took the furniture from the house "where the golden pitcher stood," evidently meaning a vase in the house of the general manager.

All this leads to one conclusion: that the peasants believed they had a right to do what they were doing.

As to the underlying causes, the proceedings of the court furnished sufficient evidence that poverty and the longing for land made the peasants susceptible to ideas of revolt and expropriation. A village priest, sincerely devoted to his flock, testified that the events in Michaylovski were due to the ignorance of the peasants and their "eternal dream of land." "Since the abolition of

serfdom," he said, "there is a deeply rooted conviction among the peasants that the landlords' estates must be given back to the people. When the manifesto of August 6th, promising the establishment of the Imperial Duma, had been read in the church, peasants came over to me asking me whether there was nothing in the manifesto about the increase of the shares of land."

The land of the peasants in those counties, besides being insufficient in quantity, was poor in quality. Various witnesses familiar with local affairs testified that the soil of the peasants was exhausted and getting worse every year, and that they could by no means exist on their agricultural work alone. Many peasants worked in the sugar factory, receiving from 6 to 7 rubles a month with food and lodging. Thousands of others were compelled to go to distant provinces in search for work. These were the most restless among the community. According to the testimony of a Dmitrievsk county Zemski Natchalnik the migratory peasants met all sorts of people and became infected with wrong ideas. On coming home, these peasants upset the minds of their neighbors. They were also responsible for the proclamations that made their appearance in the village streets.

Of the 167 indicted, two were acquitted, three were sentenced to four years at hard labor, 145 to 1.5-3.5 years in the penitentiary, 17 to 4-8 months' imprisonment.

The court hall presented an unusual sight. "I was watching the faces of those criminals," a press-correspondent says. "There were old men among them, with gray hair and beards. There were youngsters without a trace of mustache, mere boys. The faces wore an expression either of blunt submission to circumstances, or of hidden worry that had nothing to do with the trial; sometimes they were illuminated by innocent baby-smiles. Owing to the large number of the indicted, they were seated very symmetrically and they looked much more like peasant representatives at a solemn sitting of a con-

vention than like candidates for the prisoner's jacket. In the first row, the tragic figure of Klutchnikov, the Khinel reeve, attracted attention, a man of 30-32 years, with regular features, a stern face, dark-blond hair parted in the middle. He sat in the pose of a man who has been crushed by something unexpected and incomprehensible. His feet pressed heavily against the floor, his hands rested on his knees, his head was bent and his eyes gazed steadily at one point. He was motionless, silent, gloomy, and you saw in a sort of vision that this was not only an individual man, Klutchnikov, the serious-minded strong peasant, but the entire Russian people at the crossing of the roads. What was going on in this low-bent head? What thoughts were being born in this brain to the accompaniment of the soldiers' sabers? Klutchnikov was charged with having used his authority to induce his fellow-peasants to take part in a pogrom. Yet, even the chiefs of police and the employees of the sugar works characterized him as a quiet, efficient and clever peasant whom nobody expected to do any harm.

"'I do not accuse myself of anything,' was the only phrase he uttered during the proceedings. The rest of the time he was silent, remaining a mystery to all." *

Wasn't the entire Russian nation a great mystery to herself in those restless days?

* *Court Dramas,* December, 1905, pp. 342-43.

# PART IV

## FIGHTERS AND DREAMERS (*Continued*)

# CHAPTER XXV

## "CLIMBING UP"

COMPARED with the average peasant, the average workingman in the large industrial center gives the impression of a modern civilized man with modern ideas. True, his standard of living is low, yet his horizon is infinitely broader than that of a Mujik. True, he is crude and primitive and his education is very incomplete, yet he is perfectly justified in his contempt for the blunt "son of the earth." The more gifted among the workingmen succeed in becoming men of culture and of high intellectual standing.

Still, the bulk of the city workingmen are emigrants from the village. Most of them have come to the city not at a tender age, but as grown-up young men driven to hunt for money. How does it happen that an uncouth Mujik forgets his "mother-earth" and becomes imbued with urban ideas? What are the forces that turn a member of the "people" into a "gentleman" and a fighter for freedom?

One phase of this process is shown in the history of the making of a workingman by N. Petropavlovski-Karonin.* It is the merit of Karonin to have given a picture very true to life, though contradictory to his own Narodniki conceptions.

Michaylo, the hero of the story, differs little from all the village boys on the great plains of Russia. His native village is a "hole," without light or air. His parents are poor. In childhood and boyhood he never has the sensa-

*N. Petropavlovski-Karonin (+ 1892) was one of the well-known Narodniki who mainly devoted their talents to peasant life studies. The story referred to is called *Climbing Up* and forms part of the second volume of his complete works (Moscow, 1891).

tion of eating his fill. His father is a weakling, repeatedly flogged. His mother is querulous and bitter. The authorities are cruel. The local "rich man" is the uncrowned king of the village. Michaylo receives no education at all. His teachers are the steppe, the woods, the pool, the cow, the horse. From his early youth he has grown to hate the patience and the submissiveness of the peasants. Yet he himself is powerless against bad circumstances, though he works sedulously and with the utmost strain on his father's land.

He is a youth of twenty-two when he leaves the village. He simply sees no reason for staying there any longer. He looks at his family, and it seems to him that they are all dead. "Let the dead bury their dead," he decides, and goes away.

At this time Michaylo Lunin resembles a wild animal, alert, hungry, suspicious, ready to sneer at anybody and to snap at his opponent's throat. He is exceedingly self-centered. He cares for nothing but his own well-being. And he is greedy.

He wants money, much money, lots of it. He will build a large house for himself. He will buy clothes, he will have a regular brown overcoat and his wife will wear a green dress. These are his dreams when he paces the road with not a penny in his pocket and with no boots on his feet. He has no friends or relatives in the city, he knows no trade or handicraft, and he has no definite aim. But his appetite is strong, the insatiable appetite of a Mujik.

His experiences in town are disheartening. He happens to come across a band of laborers tearing down a house. Their wages are fifteen copecks a day. He joins the band, hating the laborers and the work. He has never dreamed he would be compelled to live as part of a mob. "He had come in town for his own sake," the author says; "he wanted to mind his own business; he wished to know only himself. The other people were

utterly indifferent to him. Of course, he had wished to use them as a means of getting rich, but he had never wanted to become a member of a band. He had an idea his comrades were in his way."

Necessity teaches him to endure team-work. This is the first of many lessons city life gives him in the process of "breaking" the savage Mujik. At this time he is still a drop in the ocean. He is one among numbers of peasant hosts invading the city every winter like so many swarms of locusts. They are hungry, the poor stepsons of the earth; they are starving; they are ready to do any kind of work for any pay. Outwardly, Michaylo differs in no respect from those barefooted tramps; inwardly, he is ambitious, individualistic, full of contempt for the "fools," the name which he applies to all who have not succeeded in life.

Thousands remain forever in this stage of day-laborers, thanking God for the little they manage to earn. Michaylo cannot stand it. He is too restless. Soon he quits the place to join a gang of carpenters, from whom he hopes to learn their work. The gang pays him nothing but his grub. With them he stays only a month. "Everything in the new company arouses his indignation. First, the ceremonial of the carpenters makes him laugh. Nobody ever does what the others do not do, and vice versa: whatever the gang starts to do, the individual is supposed join in. In the morning the ringleader begins to wash, and all the others simultaneously follow. If one carpenter takes his ax to begin work, all the others do the same thing." What Michaylo hates most is to see that his comrades think their work the sole task of their lives, devoting to it their energy and all their attention. Michaylo is greedy. He is still a peasant. He sees no sense in hewing day after day, year after year.

He happens to meet a fellow-countryman who has grown rather prosperous through illicit transactions. He becomes involved in a fraud without knowing exactly what

he is about. Our Michaylo awaits trial. He spends several months in jail, but his innocence is proven and he is acquitted.

All this leaves deep marks on Michaylo's soul. When he comes out of prison he discovers that he has nothing, within or without. He is bankrupt.

Now he finds employment in a brick-yard. The work is primitive and the life is utterly monotonous. "He could not remember any event," the author says, "which would distinguish one day from another. Michaylo did the same thing as did the others. Imperceptibly he was sinking ever deeper. He had no thought of his own. He thought only as much as was necessary to distinguish between brick and wood." He loses the sensation of life, of existence. When something begins to stir in him, he sleeps it off.

His indolence, however, does not last. A rebellious feeling again surges in Michaylo. This time it is not mere greed or bitterness that compels him to quit. He cannot any longer endure the servility and submissiveness of his comrades. He determines to go and ask advice from a man well known and highly estimated among the working population of the city. This man, a locksmith by trade, is the type of a modern skilled workingman, making a scant, yet tolerable, living and finding time to read books and papers and to be interested in social problems.

Our ex-Mujik comes to his house, and from this moment begins the rise of Michaylo Lunin.

Fomich, the locksmith, at the first glance guesses the tremendous mental powers and the unusual sense of justice in the little wild fellow. Michaylo, perturbed and harassed by his city experiences, looks very much like a human porcupine: he cannot speak without a sneer; when he gets excited he scoffs at everybody; he is full of mistrust; he still thinks himself far superior to all his comrades, but somehow it does not give him satisfaction. He

is disconcerted. Sometimes he is aggressive out of sheer misery.

Fomich makes him his apprentice. He gives him lodging and board in his little house and teaches him locksmith's work.

There is nothing extraordinary in the house of Fomich, as compared with the houses of any American or English workingman receiving moderate wages. Yet for the son of the village who had been a day laborer in the city it is a revelation. For the first time in his life the idea of his inferiority dawns upon Michaylo. He realizes now that he has to learn to be a man. In the company of the carpenters or brickmakers he has fed his soul on contempt for the "fools." In Fomich's company he is a fool himself. He does not know the most elementary things. He has to learn how to drink tea in a decent circle around a neatly set table. He has to learn how to use clean sheets and blankets in a regular bed, such as he has never enjoyed in his life. He has to acquire manners totally different from his former crude ways. But, most of all, he has to work on his character and his soul.

He is not afraid of any work. Now that his life has taken a new turn, showing him an example worthy of imitation, he sets to work with a fury. His arrogance is gone. He feels small. At first he is deeply embarrassed. But the friendliness of Fomich and his wife soon makes him feel at ease.

Michaylo learns his work in daytime, and in the evening he learns to read and write. This is not easy for a Mujik in his twenties, yet he has patience and peasant greediness, and he is ambitious.

His new life and his conversations with Fomich tend to abate his old-time individualism. Fomich is not a socialist or a revolutionist, but he has sound views on the life of the workingman. "The main trouble is," he says, "that our fellow-workingmen lack an idea, a general thought

which would show them what to do, where to go, how to live. You cannot expect a poor man to be a scholar, but he ought to live his own way; he ought to know how to hit the right nail on the head to improve his miserable life. He must not rely on somebody else's brains, or he'll be a plaything, a puppet in the other's hands." These ideas admirably correspond to Michaylo's inborn sense of independence. Fomich teaches him, not by talk, but by example, how to understand people, how to find the good kernel underneath an ungainly appearance.

Two or three years pass. Michaylo is changed. There is something more human about him. He has become quiet. His temper is more even. He has read many books, he has become a citizen of his country and, perhaps, of the world; yet he is now more unassuming. He knows that he knows very little, and he appreciates the poor and the ignorant more justly. He meets his old friend, Pasha, a girl whom he was attached to when living in the village. The girl has not changed. She is the same primitive peasant girl that she was before. Yet Michaylo decides to marry her, and he makes her life easy, comfortable and warm with real sympathy.

Michaylo is now assistant machinist in a factory. His salary is not large, but sufficient for a moderate way of living. He does not crave for more. On the contrary, he has to argue with his young wife, who exhibits a remarkable peasant greediness for wealth. Pasha is almost disappointed in her husband. She has thought him a real gentleman, which, in her conception, means rich, while their household is far from prosperous. Michaylo has to explain to her that wealth and happiness are not the same thing; that honest labor is morally superior to other ways of acquisition. What a change, in comparison with his former views!

Michaylo has reached the top of a hill. He can be proud of the man he has made of himself. He has a broad view of life. He is quite independent, so far as

this can be said of a wage-earner. He has a loving wife-companion. He ought to be happy. Yet he is gloomy.

"What is consuming you?" his friend Fomich asks.

"I do not know. Something is wrong. There is a void in my life."

Michaylo is a silent fellow who never talks of himself. If he now opens out before Fomich, it means that he is in great distress.

"What ails you?" Fomich inquires. "You have now what millions of people lack: mental development and bread."

Michaylo gazes at his good-natured friend with keen eyes, and there is great pain in his face as he asks:

"And what now?"

Fomich does not understand him. It is the call for a great aim *beyond* personal happiness that stirs in Michaylo. His restless nature cannot be satisfied with the quiet life in the quiet family harbor which he has constructed for himself. He has seen too much misery. Life is too ugly to allow a man to be satisfied.

For weeks Michaylo has labored under severe mental strain. "Coming home from the factory," the author says, "he would pace the room from corner to corner, dull and absent. Pasha would not interfere, she would not ask questions, but she could not understand what he was thinking about. His distress was of no definite character, very much like the feeling of depression a man experiences on a gloomy day when the sky is overcast and something weighs heavily on his brain. He worked regularly in his factory, he was even-tempered and calm with his fellow-workingmen; he seemed satisfied, yet there were days when he was beyond himself. At times a strong current of energy swept him and he felt he had to hurry and do something; but soon the moment passed, and again he was in the grip of his uneasiness, dissatisfied and downhearted, as if he had been deceived by somebody he did not know. Finally, gloom became his steady com-

panion, though his face remained calm and composed. What was the matter with him?"

On a beautiful summer holiday, walking with his friend Fomich on a hill crest, he gives vent to his pain. The two have been admiring the broad landscape, when Michaylo suddenly remarks:

"They are all down below, on the very bottom."

Fomich does not understand.

"Whom do you mean?"

"All. They are all down below, where it is dark and cold, while I am free. God, how boresome! It is dark and cold down there, and though I am in the light, I feel cold, too. And I am bored to death! Is it possible that all intelligent people feel the same as I? What a horror, Fomich! Here I am, on top of a rock bathed in sunshine, and down there is an abyss, deep, bottomless. . . . From the abyss a clamor of voices is heard. I cannot make out the words, I do not see the human beings, for they are on the very bottom and the abyss is deep and covered with a veil of mist. But I hear voices, sometimes bitter groaning, sometimes rude laughter. I often think: how is it possible to live down there in the depths? How did it happen that I reached the top? At times I am proud I am here; I am happy to have fled from the depths. But then I am ashamed, I am disturbed, I am angry. . . . Why is it that I alone stay here, while the others do not follow my example? Let the sun pour its light over me, let my eyes behold the boundless vistas, let the clean air fill my bosom, I cannot be satisfied as long as I cannot share it with those in the abyss. . . . Only that is dear to use which we can share according to our wishes. If we cannot share our bread, it becomes stale in our mouth; if we cannot share our thoughts with others, they are bound to poison us, to kill us!"

The author does not disclose the further development of Michaylo Lunin. The story ends with the scene on the hill crest. Yet it is easy to see that for Michaylo

there is only one way out of his depression. Michaylo as an individual may land in an insane asylum or commit suicide. Michaylo as a collective type furnished the human material for the first rank of the revolutionary army. The collective Michaylo was the first organizer of labor unions and the first political agitator among the mass of the urban working population.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE SUBURB

"It is like a house on fire. One flame joins another flame, and all rise high. It bursts through here, it sparkles there, ever brighter, ever stronger."

Thus an old working-woman in Gorki's *Mother* describes the movement among her class on the eve of 1905. The woman herself is of peasant birth, but the industrial suburb, the scene of the first part of Gorki's story, is diametrically opposed to village life or peasant ideas. The inhabitants of the suburb are industrial workingmen in the second or third generation. The admixture of newcomers who have worked on the soil themselves is comparatively small. The yearning of the peasant for independence as an economic unit is foreign to the inhabitants of the suburb. None of them ever hopes to become a "boss" himself. None of them sees a way of gaining prosperity at one leap, as does the peasant in his dream of land. The inhabitants of the suburb are, therefore, gloomier, sterner and more dissatisfied than even the rural population. On the other hand, the people of the suburb have more culture; the younger generation nearly all know how to read and write.

They look pitifully small and accidental—those beginnings of a revolutionary propaganda in the suburb. A few young men, mere boys, come secretly together to read leaflets or books. What are the subjects of their studies? Gorki does not say, but usually it is the history of civilization, the history of the labor-movement, the elements of political economy and a description of the political parties in western Europe. The studies are conducted under the leadership of an "intellectual" tutor, usually a student

The Workingman Who Reads Indulges in a Dangerous Occupation

or a professional man. In the majority of cases the tutor is not a specialist in social problems. The instruction cannot be conducted regularly, owing to the vigilance of the police. The pupils, therefore, can get very little positive knowledge out of those secret readings. To the outsider the whole affair looks very harmless.

"Are those your 'secret' people?" the mother asks one of the boys. The mother cannot see how these clean, innocent youths and this young, slender girl who has come from the city to read to them about how people lived in former generations can be dangerous to anybody. Yet those weekly readings are of momentous consequence for the suburb.

The little circle is originally confined to its own education. Knowledge to them, however, is not an aim in itself. "We must kindle ourselves with the flame of reason, so that those in the dark may see us," one of the men says. "We ought to answer every question honestly and truthfully. We ought to know what is truth, what is falsehood."

Knowledge to these people is a weapon for the battle they are preparing to wage. The "truth" is what they intend to preach among their comrades. They wish to improve their lives, yet material well-being alone is not the end of their strivings. "It is not only the stomach that we wish to fill," one of the boys says. "No! we wish to be *men!* We must show those who are riding on our necks that we see everything. We are not beasts looking for food only. We wish to live as befits human beings. We must show our enemies that the miserable life they compel us to lead cannot prevent us from becoming equal to them in intellect, and in spirit superior to them!"

These young boys feel themselves the vanguard of a vast army, to which it is for them to show the right way. Hence their exaltation, hence the great importance they attach to their gatherings and their conversations. Some-

times a wave of irresistible joy sweeps the circle. Their eyes sparkle, their laughter is full of happiness, their speech is merry. This occurs when they read in the papers of a new victory of the working class abroad. "Splendid fellows, those Germans!" they shout. "Long live our comrades, the workingmen of Italy." They have not yet begun to fight themselves, but they feel related to all the laboring masses of the world. "In the little room," the author says, "a tremendous, boundless feeling is born, a feeling of spiritual kinship with all workers, the masters and the slaves of the world, whose reason already has freed them from the bondage of superstition and who have begun to look upon themselves as the sovereigns of the earth."

The circle increases in membership. It is perhaps not only the wish to improve the life of the masses that draws individuals "from the dark" into the dangerous light of the revolutionary circle. Perhaps it is a desire to be "something," to feel one's own personality, to know that one is not merely a "number" in the factory and a zero in social life, but also a man of capacity and distinction. Perhaps the danger of membership in a revolutionary organization makes it especially attractive to persons with a lively imagination. But all those circles and the organization in general are able to assert themselves and gain self-respect only through work among the masses.

Soon the streets of the suburb are strewn with "papers" written with blue ink (hectographically reproduced proclamations). The "papers" venomously criticize the system in the factory, they tell about labor strikes in Petersburg and Southern Russia, they call the workingmen to unite in defense of their interests. The "papers" are read and commented upon. The older folks are morose, the younger are delighted, the majority have no confidence in the strength of the workingmen, yet they know the "papers" are well meant; the papers speak

about the sufferings of the working people; they are telling "the truth."

A bond of sympathy is established between the secret organization and the bulk of the toilers. The "papers" appear regularly; they have become necessary to the population. When they fail to appear for a whole week, people are uneasy. None of the "rank and file" knows the address or the members of the organization, yet its influence grows.

Thus a double task is being performed by the revolutionary circle: it forges personalities out of the crude metal of working humanity, and it sows the seeds of unrest among the masses.

The police is on its guard. Repressive measures are not delayed. Many houses are searched. A number of workingmen are put into jail. But this cannot stop the movement. No arrests can entirely uproot the organization, and should that happen by some unhappy concurrence of circumstances, a new organization would soon be founded.

The searching of the houses is the first incident where our converts come in close contact with the enemy. They look upon the officers not as representatives of a government, but as "tools of the forces of darkness." Our young workingmen, whose fathers used to bend low before every uniformed Tchinovnick, manifest a remarkable degree of independence and boldness. They treat the officers as inferior beings. They insist on their human rights, denied them by the laws of their country.

It is of the spirit of the time that all these events, hopeless as they may look to the skeptic, increase the unrest and serve the cause of the revolution. A workingman's neighbor is arrested. He has been a sober, honest and genial young man, incapable of wrong. Yet he is in prison. Why? The imagination is stirred. People begin to talk. Young Pavel Vlasov has spoken to the gendarmerie officer as to an equal. Young Pavel Vlasov is only an ordinary

workingman well known in the suburb. Where did he get his "nerve"? People discuss the absorbing news in the shop, at the bar, on the benches in front of their cabins. A proclamation commenting on the arrests is read with avidity. The action temporarily eliminating a number of revolutionary agitators becomes in itself a source of lively agitation. Thus nothing is lost in the life of a fighter for freedom.

They all know that sooner or later they will have to pay their toll of prison months or years, but this is part of their program. The average duration of a revolutionist's activities between one arrest and another is perhaps only half a year. The more reason they have to expound their energies in those brief intervals.

The unrest in the suburb is growing. There is already a periodical paper published in the city, where all the news from the various factories is given a prominent place. People become accustomed to looking upon the paper as expressing their own needs. Soon an occasion presents itself for the leader of the revolutionary circle to step forth and openly defend the interests of his comrades. The factory administration has decided to deduct one per cent. from the workingmen's wages to form a fund to be used for the draining of the nearby swamp. The administration claims that the draining of the swamp, being advantageous for the workmen's health, has to be paid for out of their wages. The workmen are enraged. They know well that the swamp is only a pretext for cutting their earnings. A crowd gathers on the factory grounds. Pavel Vlasov is the leader. Pavel Vlasov speaks to the general manager in the name of the crowd. He makes his first public address. Pavel Vlasov, the stern revolutionist, is recognized as representative of his fellow-workers. The workers go on strike.

Old Sizov, one of the crowd, voices the general sentiment when he says:

"It's time for us old folks to rest in the cemetery. A

new generation is coming. What was our life? On our knees we crawled, low to the ground we bowed. Now look at the youngsters! I can say only this: either they've come to their senses or they are making still worse blunders. Look at the youngsters talking to the manager as to their equal!"

Pavel goes to prison. Everybody in the suburb knows he has been locked up for defending the cause of the people. This fact has a greater influence on the average mind than the hottest revolutionary oration.

"Don't you be out of heart," an ignorant woman says to Pavel's mother. "There's nothing wrong about it. In former years people went to jail for stealing; now they take them for telling the truth. Your Pavel may have said one thing or the other in an improper way, but he stood up for all, and people know who's good."

Events take their natural course. Pavel is in prison, but the propaganda is conducted on an ever broader scale. Pavel himself does not waste his time behind the iron bars: he studies diligently and makes his fellow-prisoners read and think. Thus they use the involuntary intermission in their activities to equip themselves with more ammunition for the coming battles. In fact, the prison has become a vital part of the revolutionary organization. There is a steady current of people moving from the suburb to the prison, from the prison back to the suburb, or to another industrial center where the face of a certain individual revolutionist is not yet known to the detectives. The revolutionary party is the connecting link between the local circles, working out slogans, outlining general tactics, providing the circles with literature and regulating the exchange of revolutionary agents between one town and another.

The machinery is hard at work, yet it must be noted—and this is the most remarkable sign of the times—that the revolutionary *effect* is incomparably larger than the revolutionary *activity*. Pavel's circle has no means of

reaching every one in the suburb. It has no great orators, it can call no public mettings, it has to do its work in the dark, against the constant vigilance of secret-service men; it is comparatively slight in numbers. Still, the revolutionary spirit creeps from house to house, from individual to individual. People are proud to become at least sympathizers of those daring revolutionists; sometimes men are not even conscious of the fact that they have become imbued with the new spirit, as is, for instance, the case with an old, ordinary workingman who is anxious to know whether his son "behaves" in prison, whether he does not squeal.

Little by little the suburb undergoes a remarkable change. It grows to look upon itself as a separate world, hostile to the government and to the existing order. Its conceptions are still primitive, its understanding of events quite obscure, yet the revolutionary slogans of unity, of "one for all, all for one," of struggle against exploitation and its sponsor, the government, and of brotherhood of all the workers the world over, have sunk deep into their souls. They have learned to know that they "have nothing to lose but their chains," and that "in their strength is their only salvation."

There is the spirit of religious ardor and religious devotion in the movement of the suburb. Men do not fight only for one per cent. of their wages. Men do not fight only for the freedom of organizing a trade-union. Men do not even fight for a representative government. Men, young and old, have become obsessed by a holy spirit of self-sacrifice for some great radiant God whose name they do not know, whose breath, however, they feel in their throbbing hearts. Men are groping toward a vast luminous life of beauty, of truth and of good which they cannot even picture in their minds. "Freedom" is more than removal of police restrictions, it is the upward striving of human souls.

The first of May comes. On this day the revolutionary

workingmen, for the first time in the history of their town, will raise the red flag in the street, openly and freely, in the face of all the forces of evil. Pavel, now out of prison, decides to carry the flag himself, in the first rank of the first revolutionary procession. His comrades, aware of the peril he is exposing himself to, implore him to stay away. He is needed, they urge, for the most vital work of the organization; they cannot afford to sacrifice him in this manner. Yet Pavel is implacable. It is not only his duty, it is his great joy. "I am not doing it for the comrades," he says, "*I am doing it for myself.*" This moment of sublime happiness is the reward for all his work.

The moment arrives. Pavel is in the liveliest part of the suburb, in front of the church. He is surrounded by a dense crowd of his comrades. Large throngs of people have gathered in the place, some curious to see the unusual sight, some sympathetic. Pavel's voice rings. "Brothers," he says, "the time has come for us to forswear this life that is full of greed, rancor and darkness, this life where people are violated, where there is no place for us, where we are not considered as human beings."

He stops, the people are silent, the crowd closes more densely around him. His eyes are proud, daring, luminous.

"Comrades! We have decided to declare openly who we are. We raise our banner to-day, the banner of reason, truth and freedom."

And there is the shiver of religious ecstacy in the crowd, there is the touch of divine fingers on the strings of every heart when the white, slender flagpole flashes in the air and the red, magnificent banner unfurls over the heads of the workingmen.

"Long live the working people! Long live the Social-Democratic Labor Party! Long live the working people of all the world!" the demonstrators shout.

No! this is not a mere political demonstration. Andrey,

Pavel's friend, is right when he speaks to the crowd in a singing, beautiful tone: "Comrades, we are now in a holy procession in the name of a new God, the God of light and truth, the God of reason and good. Our road is long and hard, our goal is far away, the crown of thorns is near. Whoever does not believe in the power of truth, whoever is not brave enough to stand up for it even unto death, whoever does not believe in himself through fear of suffering, let him stay away. We call upon those who believe in our triumph. Forward, comrades, close your lines! Long live the holiday of free men!"

Eyes blaze, lips quiver in deep emotion, breasts heave. The crowd has become one person, with one radiant soul. The police will soon arrive. The marchers will be met by detachments of soldiers in order of battle. Drums will sound. Bayonets will be pointed at the breasts of the ranks. They will not hesitate. Louder and louder will sound the hymn of freedom. Deeper and deeper will sink into each heart the gospel of Truth and Love.

There is a skirmish. Pavel and many others are seized. The crowd is dispersed. The banner is torn to pieces. Brutal force is triumphant once more. But the suburb does not think itself defeated. The suburb has had a lesson. The factory-workers who in the morning had refused to go on strike, now quit work to join the "holiday of free men." The majority of them may not be able to explain the significance of a May-day demonstration, yet they join the more enlightened as if driven by some instinct.

Once more Pavel Vlasov is in prison. This time they are going to try him in court. He knows he will be sent to Siberia for life; but he knows also, and his comrades know, that he will escape from there to join his organization, to fall again and again into the hands of the enemies and escape at the first opportunity. His comrades suggest that he flee from prison (this can be arranged), but Pavel wishes to face trial, he wishes to speak the truth in

the court-house, "to judge his judges," to give a clear presentation of his views and aspirations. A speech of this kind can have a tremendous influence on the minds of the workingmen, and Pavel is not a man to miss the occasion.

He makes his speech, and the secret press carries it all over the country. The trial does not fail to serve the cause of the revolution.

Everything serves the cause of the revolution. A labor strike has been suppressed by the authorities: it sets people thinking. A revolutionist has died and the police cut off the red ribbons his comrades have attached to the wreath of flowers: it only shows the meanness of a government which wreaks vengeance even on the dead. A collision between revolutionists and policemen has occurred at the funeral of the comrade: it only adds to the agitation.

The inhabitants of the suburb, who in former years were dull, gloomy slaves, lazy in mind, patient in work, irritable without reason, morose with their families and brutally drunk on holidays, now breathe a new life. They have found a way out of their misery. They have discovered the source of all their suffering. They are a warring camp in the struggle against a cunning foe.

Ever broader the waves of emotion spread. The suburb now extends its net over the village, supplying Mujiks with agitators and leaflets. "The silent patience of the people disappeared," the author says; "a tense expectation took its place. The irritation grew perceptibly, harsh words were uttered, something new, something stimulating was in the air."

And who started all this vast commotion? A small circle of workingmen assembling every Saturday to listen to the readings of a young, slender girl belonging to the intellectual classes. . . .

Such were the tokens of the new times.

# CHAPTER XXVII

## THE ÉLITE OF THE WORKING-CLASS

The mother-heroine, Pelagia Vlasov, the central figure of Gorki's *Mother,* though quite plausible, was not a typical case in the Russian revolution. As to the other revolutionary characters in this story, they are taken from actual life and are well known to any one who came in touch with the revolutionary movement.

Pavel Vlasov is the typical conspirator. His entire life is one straight line of duty. He is able to compromise neither in private nor in public matters. When a lad of sixteen or seventeen he informed his mother of his revolutionary intentions. "I am reading forbidden books," he said. "They are forbidden because they tell the truth about the life of the workingmen. They are being secretly printed, and if caught with them, I shall have to go to prison." Pavel Vlasov knows that his mother will suffer, but he deems it his duty to speak frankly. She must face the facts, the sooner the better. "I wish to know the truth," he says to her, and once the truth is found he becomes its faithful knight for life.

In his early youth he hated all human beings. Prior to becoming familiar with revolutionary ideas he frequently had spells of grave melancholy. In his factory he worked steadily and accurately, but in his free hours he was downcast and gloomy. "It's intolerable; they are all like so many machines," he used to say to his mother, and his steady, blue eyes had a haunted look. From the moment he became converted to the gospel of revolution, his attitude towards people changed. He pities instead of hating them. They are to him like foolish children groping in the dark while broad, white-lit vistas are open

before them. He no longer despises his fellow human beings, but there is in him a subconscious feeling of his own superiority. He is the chosen one. He is the priest of the Holy Truth. A certain aloofness marks his attitude towards the rest of humanity.

He is cool. He never smiles. He never reads poetry. On the wall of his room there is a picture of Christ and among his books there is the Bible, both symbols of self-sacrifice in the name of a great Truth. Pavel knows he is destined to carry a heavy cross up a steep mountain. Christ will be his shining example.

He looks older than his age. He is very judicious. People come to him to ask his advice, and he listens calmly, his mind alert, his attention noticing every detail. When he speaks, his judgment is ripe, his suggestions are well founded, and he always finds a way to link the particular with the general, to illumine the case with the light of a broad conception.

Pavel Vlasov is a believer in Reason. Let the people *understand!*—is his slogan. His way of influencing human beings is the way of conviction. His speech is clear and reserved, his sentences short, his voice seldom aglow with emotion. "You speak well," a friend tells him after his first public speech, "but you do not appeal to the heart. One ought to throw the spark deep into human hearts. Reason alone won't do." Pavel is sorry he cannot show people the truth in all her radiant colors as *he* sees her himself, but he has no other way than that of reason.

Pavel is an ascetic. He finds no pleasure in ordinary distractions. His thoughts and dreams and ambitions are all centered in the revolutionary work. From his mother he demands a suppression of all her motherly grief and sorrow. When he informs her of his decision to carry the flag on the May-day demonstration, he is cool and very austere. His mother does not object, but he feels she is deeply wounded, and this he fails to understand.

"You must not grieve," he says, "you must be happy. The time will come when mothers will joyfully send their sons to death." He himself finds it only natural when his mother begins to help the revolutionary movement. He does not think of the dangers she is exposed to. Everybody must serve the people's cause. Prison and exile are only part of the service.

Pavel Vlasov loves a girl, a member of the revolutionary organization, yet he never speaks to her of his emotions and he suppresses his love as something to be ashamed of. The girl loves him, too, but they do not marry. "Family life diminishes the energy of the revolutionist," a comrade explains to Vlasov's mother. "Family life means children, greater needs, lots of work to make a living, while the revolutionist ought to develop his energy ever deeper and broader. This requires time. We workingmen ought to be always in the first ranks, ahead of all, because we are destined to destroy the old world and to create a new life. If we lag behind, overcome by fatigue or distracted by the possibility of a trifling conquest, we are doing wrong, we are almost traitors." Pavel Vlasov is not a man to be blamed for lagging behind and becoming almost a traitor.

Pavel Vlasov is merciless to himself and to others. He hates cowards. He hates self-deception. He wants every member of his organization to face danger squarely and unflinchingly. He wants his comrades to expect the worst. "You may be shot if the authorities find you out," he calmly says to a young man who intends to conduct revolutionary propaganda among the soldiers. By no means does he wish to make the task of a revolutionist appear more agreeable, more cheerful.

Pavel Vlasov is a man of iron. He is born to be a leader. Consciously and deliberately he extinguishes many a light in his soul lest it illuminate regions foreign to his task. By sheer will-power he compresses himself ever more till he resembles a strong steel-spring, ready

to expand with tremendous power. His energy is of the kind that is compelling. People *must* follow Vlasov because he is a master.

Deep under the cover of sternness and restraint there is in Vlasov a lucid source of tenderness and affection for his mother, his beloved, his friends; these feelings, however, express themselves only in a casual glance, in a softer timbre of the voice, in a caressing word. Pavel Vlasov is afraid to be affectionate. It seems as if his life-mate, the revolution, were jealous of every grain of energy devoted to others.

Straight, silent, almost impersonal, almost a hermit for the rest of the world, Pavel Vlasov, the knight of the Holy Truth, will follow his difficult road. He will not groan when poisonous thorns sink into his flesh. He will not complain when his soul writhes with mortal pain. When the hour strikes, he will give away his life, quiet and restrained till the last breath, as behooves a man who gives light to those in the dark.

Just the opposite is his friend, Andrey Nachodka. Though older than Pavel and more experienced, he looks younger. He is tall and rather heavy, and there is something childish in his appearance. He has a remarkable capacity for making friends. Everybody feels at ease with him. After a short talk one has the impression of having known him for years. Andrey is very clever, very observant, very striking in his remarks, yet he hurts nobody. His sense of humor is of a smiling good-natured character. He is genial, cheerful, talkative, seemingly superficial, in reality deeply stirred by the processes of life.

Andrey Nachodka is a poet. He sees visions. His very participation in the revolutionary movement is due, perhaps, to his longing for beauty in human relations. The revolutionary movement itself seems to him the incarnation of ideal beauty. "At times I have wonderful feelings," he says. "Everywhere men seem to be com-

rades, all lit with the same fire, all happy, good, cheerful, understanding each other at a glance, having no desire to hurt anybody. Men seem to be one great chorus, each heart singing its own song, all songs flowing into a great, beautiful river which rolls majestically towards the ocean of sun-kissed joys, the ocean of a new life."

Andrey Nachodka is never depressed. It seems as if nothing can cloud his serene mood. He takes all the inconveniences of his occupation with a hearty smile. He wanders from town to town as if for his own pleasure. He feels a citizen of the labor world, quite comfortable wherever he happens to stay. He gives the impression of being incapable of feeling pain.

Yet his heart is full of pain—for others, for the world. He feels the grief of all the mothers whose sons have gone on the perilous road of revolt; he feels the aching of his comrades' hearts when they tear themselves away from what is dearest to them. He has a violent clash with Pavel Vlasov for being too rigid with his poor old mother: he calls it conceit and self-indulgence, though he sees very well his comrade's side. He is tender and sensitive and delicate and pure.

It is the great tragedy of his life that instead of loving he is compelled to hate; instead of admiring beauty and caressing the sprouting buds of life, he must fight bloody battles abhorrent to his nature. Yet he does not shirk. "What can you do?" he says. "You must hate men in order to hasten the coming of a time when you will be able to admire men. We must destroy those who are in the way of life, who sell men for money to acquire respect and comfort. If Judas blocks the road of honest men ready to betray them, I should be a Judas myself not to crush him. . . . At times I am compelled to resort to the enemies' weapon,—is it my fault? Is it a sin? They kill scores of us, hundreds of us. This gives me a right to raise my hand and strike one of the enemy's heads, the man who approaches me nearest or is most in-

jurious to the work of my life. This is logical. . . . If necessary, I shall tear my own heart from my breast and trample it with my feet."

Andrey Nachodka meets the local spy, who is thoroughly familiar with the life of the suburb and therefore very dangerous to the organization. The spy tries to induce him to become an agent of "law and order." Andrey is so outraged that he slaps the man in his face. Walking away he hears one of his comrades attacking the spy. He knows that the work of death is being done behind his back. He is appalled, yet he does not turn to stop the assassin. For a long time he has a nauseating feeling, as if he himself had done the ugly thing. Pavel does not understand his disgust. "Why, you haven't killed him," he says, "and if . . . what would it matter?" But Andrey is all astir. "Brother," he says, "it was a man anyway, it was a human being. It is loathsome. To know that a man is being killed and not to interfere . . . this is perhaps the most hateful cowardice." Yet when the ordeal by fire comes and Andrey faces the necessity of using a club, he will do it, he will "weed the fields of life" that the new crops may freely grow.

In the midst of the ugly present, in the din and crash and turmoil of a dreary world he feels the growth of a big heart. "A new heart is growing, mother dear," he says to Vlasov's mother, "a new heart is throbbing in the body of life. All hearts have been rent by malevolence, gnawed by greed, bitten by envy, all are torn, wounded, oozing filth, falsehood, cowardice. . . . All men are sick, afraid of life, walking as in a fog, knowing each his own pain. But here a Man comes illuminating life with the blaze of Reason, calling, shouting: Oh, you straying creatures! The time has come for you to know that the interests of all are the same, that all ought to live, all wish to grow. He is alone, the man who calls, he must strain his voice to be heard, he needs friends,

he feels lonesome, dreary and cold. But at the sound of his voice what is healthy in all hearts unites, all hearts join each other and form one heart, strong, deep, sensitive, as a great silver bell. And hark! the bell rings forth: Peoples of all the world unite into one family! Love, not hatred, is the mother of life! . . . Brothers, I hear this bell ringing in the world."

Under the accompaniment of the great silver bell a man like Andrey can smilingly endure all the tortures of life. And he, not his friend Pavel, is destined "to throw the spark deep into human hearts."

Pavel and Andrey are the aristocrats of the suburb, the élite of the labor-movement. Their comrade Nicholas is of the rank and file. Nicholas Vyesovshchikov has no talents; he is neither a good organizer nor a good speaker, nor has he a vivid imagination. What makes him strong and keeps him upright is hatred, venomous, irritable hatred. His furious mood is due, perhaps, to the fact that his father is the well-known thief of the suburb; perhaps it is his ungainly appearance, his pock-marked face, his awkward figure that have made him a lonely, sullen creature, ready to sneer at people. Nobody loves him, and he loves nobody, and it seems that he has joined the organization out of sheer despair.

His first years in the organization are marked with hatred only. When the house of Pavel is being searched in his presence, he is the only one who is impertinent to the gendarmerie officer. "Don't you know who are the rascals spreading criminal proclamations in the factory?" the officer asks Andrey, and before the latter has time to answer, Nicholas grumbles from his corner: "This is the first time we've seen rascals here." The officer is infuriated. Nicholas goes to prison. In the cell he is impertinent to the guards and the warden. His friend Pavel tries to assuage him, but he cannot master his temper. "They are poisonous scabs," he says, "they must be destroyed."

Out of prison, he is still gloomier. "I think some people must be killed," he declares once to Andrey.

"What for?" Andrey queries.

"In order that they may not exist."

"Have you a right to make corpses out of living human beings?" Andrey jokingly asks.

"Yes. I have a mandate from the people," Nicholas replies.

"People are my enemies," he continues by way of explanation. "If they kick me, I have a right to hit them, to smash their muzzles, their hideous eyes. . . . I hate them, and I won't let them live."

Nicholas is suspicious. Not even his friends does he trust. "You don't treat me as an equal," he says to Andrey. "You and Pavel are the clever ones, to you I am not the same as the other comrades. You keep me at a distance." His mistrust is only an expression of his disgust with himself. "I have a bad face," he says, scrutinizing his reflection in the mirror. "What does your face matter?" Andrey replies. "Why," Nicholas says, "Sahenka" (the girl agitator) "told us that the face is the mirror of the soul." Andrey tries to make a joke of it, but Nicholas is unhappy. He knows that he is obnoxious to his acquaintances, owing to his surliness, yet this only makes him more unhappy.

Nicholas is impatient in revolutionary affairs. He wants everything to be done immediately. "I can't wait," he says, "it's too long." He wishes to go and overthrow things right away. He wants to "fight." He would like to kill and burn. He is not satisfied with his friends' explanation that the established order is to be blamed. He wants to find a guilty person, the "most guilty of all," and to do away with him. "He is like an overheated stove," Pavel's mother remarks, "he burns but he doesn't warm."

After his second imprisonment, however, from which he escaped by mere chance, a great change comes over

him. He has not wasted his time in prison. He has studied much and thought much. He has communicated with his fellow-prisoners, better educated, more experienced and having a better understanding of life than he. He has been compelled to work over himself. Perhaps the prison is the first place where he has come into close touch with people. And he has learned that there are beautiful, unselfish and sincere men and women in the world.

After his escape he is much softer, friendlier, more comradely than before. His fondness for the revolutionary organization has increased. He becomes a typesetter in a secret press and is happy to serve the great cause.

Prison has made him a useful member of the revolutionary organization.

A gallery of revolutionary workingmen is presented in R. Grigoryev's story, *Fading Away,* which deals with the revolutionary labor-movement at the time of the second Duma. The most conspicuous figure is Sergey Petrov. His road to revolutionary prominence has been easy. A graduate of a public school in Petersburg, he has early taken a fancy to reading. Incidentally he has come across the Marxist literature, which he has studied alone, without aid. It has induced him to join the revolutionary organization. A good orator, a strong opponent at open debates, and a good organizer, he soon becomes known in revolutionary Petersburg. He addresses gatherings not only of workingmen, but also of intellectuals. In his speech and carriage he hardly differs from a poor student or a teacher, yet he is always aware of the fact that he is not an "intellectual," and he makes the intellectuals feel he is aware of it. He is not quite himself in the society of educated men. This attitude he shares with many a workingman who, meeting the intellectuals on a seemingly equal footing in the labor organization, privately, however, cannot forgive them their "gentle-

manly" descent and "gentlemanly" mode of living. This attitude towards the intellectuals was widespread and painful, and it sometimes became harmful to the very progress of the organization. Its roots were many. On one side the workingman was taught that all men are born equal and was at least sure that inside of the revolutionary organization there could exist no inequality whatsoever; on the other hand he saw "comrades" who, earning perhaps no more than an average skilled laborer, managed to live a life far more beautiful and comfortable than a regular "proletarian." On one side he was taught that the working-class was the real power, the great creator of a new life, while the intellectuals were a negligible group, a passing category in the historical process; on the other hand he saw the intellectuals occupying the most prominent places in the revolutionary organization, enjoying recognition and actually leading the entire movement by mere power of intellect and knowledge. This hurt. It hurt the more, the higher the workingman climbed on the ladder of mental development.

Besides this aching attitude towards the intellectuals, Sergey Petrov has another source of suffering: his fits of drinking. He is not a drunkard in the ordinary sense of the word, only once in several months he gets a spell which lasts a week or more. During the spell he never sobers up, he sells everything he can lay hands on to get more whisky, he acts all the time like a delirious person, till one morning he wakes up with a terrific headache and a mental nausea. This drinking-disease goes very badly with the work of a revolutionist in a responsible position. Petrov knows it and he struggles hard against his fatal inclination, but time and again he is overcome by a power stronger than his will, and he finds himself alone in his room facing a big bottle of whisky.

In his revolutionary work Sergey Petrov is strong, devoted, uncompromising. "The activities of an agitator and an orator never satisfied him," the author says.

"Real work he deemed only the slow and troublesome work of an organizer. When he saw the brittle, formless human material hardening and taking shape under his fingers, when he felt the mass of the working-people crystallizing around himself hard and firm, he experienced the real joy and satisfaction of a creative process."

It is a hard time in which Petrov lives. The first Duma has been dissolved, the second Duma is doomed to death. The labor organizations are falling to pieces. Petrov has not lost his faith in the revolution, he still hopes a new wave is coming. In his dark hours he loves to resort to visions of the future which he sees in his imagination. "He sees the future life in himself and around himself with indisputable clearness, not as a miracle, but as a natural consequence of natural causes." But times are becoming harder and harder.

Petrov cannot conceive it. He cannot admit defeat. He cannot even think of a compromise. "We must fight," he says to a friend, "we must feel that we are crushing, strangling them, or we are not worth anything." Petrov holds his head high, but tempests are raging within him.

The dissolution of the Duma is at hand. Petrov calls a private meeting of the "proletarian" members of the revolutionary committee, avoiding the intellectuals. He puts before them the question, what shall be done in case the Duma is dissolved? One of the workingmen says: "I am afraid no collective protest is possible. The masses are tired, downcast, no slogans can be voiced in advance."

Petrov is upset. "Why are you so afraid?" he exclaims. "Why are you always seeing black? Before the Duma convened you prophesied the Black Hundred peril, in the time of elections you predicted our defeat. Now that the proletariat follows with absorbing interest the fight of our representatives in the Duma, you speak of fatigue, of depression. You judge by the fact that

the workingmen are slow in frequenting our circles, but who are now the instructors of the circles? The intellectuals are deserting the organization, and our own folk are unable to put two words together."

"Oh, Sergey," the man replies. "You don't see the facts. Our people have taken to drinking again. In Peskovka the women have become infuriated, they have declared a strike, they do not want to have secret meetings in their houses. . . . Loads of people are being arrested, exiled, loads are being discharged. . . . Life has become unbearable. . . . *Our* people, the old guard, are nearly all gone, the young ones do not believe in the cause, it is difficult to start in such times."

"No!" Petrov vigorously protests, "it is not they who lack faith, it is you! It is not true. It is a calumny that you invent on the working-class! I thought that only the intellectuals turned their backs upon the work; now I see that you, the cream of the working population, are no better. You are walking around with sour faces, you doom every enterprise to failure by your downheartedness, you influence the mood of the masses. . . . Where are our workingmen? You say they left us. Yes, but this does not mean they left the movement. They simply turned their backs upon our weakened, crumbling organization. . . . What is to be done, then? We must speak to them directly, avoiding the organization, avoiding you!"

Petrov's lips quiver. He feels some untruth in the words of his comrades, but an unspeakable fear befalls him. Something horrifying is going on. Whatever has happened, he has been used to put the blame on the organization, not on the working-class. Now he is compelled to doubt the foundation of his creed: the readiness of the working-masses to fight. He cannot digest this new revelation, the author says. "In his own blood, in his strong muscles he felt a spirited vigor, a steadfast aptitude for action. He never distinguished between his

own mental processes and those of the proletariat, being in the habit of using ' we wish ' instead of ' I wish.' How was it possible that they were ' fatigued ' while he was ready for a decisive combat? "

" Wait a little! " he shouted. " Who are you, then? Who am I? You, Kalyonov, aren't you strong, forceful, active? Would you desert our cause? Would you resign? And you, Kiryusha, are you really tired? Don't you like our strife any more? And you, Kleshtch? You are laughing at me! Is it not strange that I come to you with such questions? I know you are a fiery fellow, Kleshtch, you would not be able to live without passionate work! Who is tired, then? Aren't ' they ' the same men as ' we ' are? . . . Am I becoming insane, perhaps? "

Events prove that his comrades are right. The Duma is soon dissolved. Nothing follows. The workingmen are silent. Petrov, in spite of former bitter apprehensions, is unable to reconcile himself with the facts. He continues waiting for revolts. And though he admits to Kalyonov on the third day after the dissolution of the Duma that the working-class is beaten, he does not believe it, secretly expecting protests from the ranks of those who have never come in contact with the organization.

On the fifth day he gives up hope, and pretending to be ill, shuts himself in his house. Days and nights he lies on his bed, face turned to the wall, trying to understand what has happened.

The organization in the meantime is rapidly disappearing. The intellectuals are quitting their work, the masses are not responding to the calls of those who remain. Meetings formerly frequented by several hundred hardly attract a dozen. Nobody is to be blamed, but the revolutionary forces are shrinking deplorably.

When Petrov finally comes out of his room, he is a changed man. He has no desire to meet comrades. He

has no interest in life. The administration of his factory discharges him, he has no means of subsistence, but somehow he is indifferent to it. He is indifferent to everything. Not even drinking attracts him any longer. There is no reason for resisting temptation, and temptation has lost its effect. He goes to a saloon and pours down his throat one glass after another, without sense of taste or of smell. He hopes for relief, but the gloom bites deeper into his soul; everything becomes colorless and confused, and no joy and no boisterous feeling of freedom is born from the burning liquid.

Sometimes a fresh fit of energy comes over him. He runs to a comrade, decides to call a mass-meeting, chooses a topic which would appeal to the masses. At such times he is the old strong and restless Petrov. But then comes the evening. The meeting-place is empty. All hopes fade again, and Petrov is face to face with deadly anguish.

A few weeks later Petrov makes an attempt on the life of a police-officer and is caught. Evidently, this is only a way of committing suicide. Petrov is tried, sentenced to death, and soon executed.

The cause of the revolution was seemingly lost. It is interesting, however, to notice, that *Fading Away* does not end in a minor key. Two or three years pass after 1907. An intellectual of the "good old times" happens to be at a concert for the benefit of a workmen's organization. She recognizes one of the "rank and file" of former years and is surprised to notice the new tone of self-confidence and the fresh combative spirit in this representative of the masses.

"Why recollect the past?" she says. "Aren't we all beaten? What is the use of talking?"

"Oh, no!" the workingman eagerly interrupts her. "You are mistaken, comrade! *We* are not beaten at all. *You* went away from us. We, however, continued growing. During those hard years a new intellectual force has

arisen among us. We are going to have our own proletarian leaders. Don't you feel that the hardest times are over! What a youth has sprung up among the working people!"

This was written in 1913. At that time new waves of revolutionary movement were already sweeping the capital of Russia. A new era was coming.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### IN SEARCH OF IMMATERIAL VALUES

The Russian intellectual sought in the revolution neither land, like the peasant, nor bread and culture, like the workingman. The Russian intellectual had enough opportunities of earning a living even under the autocratic régime, and as to social distinction and recognition, he enjoyed it in a far greater measure than did his colleagues in the more progressive countries where the differences between the educated and non-educated classes were less marked. What the intellectuals really needed as a social group was *political freedom,* giving intelligence and knowledge a share in the ruling of the nation. From the standpoint of group-interests, the intellectuals in Russia ought to have formed a *purely political* party aiming solely at the overthrow of the absolutist order. Yet they were well enough acquainted with the history of revolutions to know that a party of this kind consisting of intellectuals only, would be powerless to change the existing order. The Zemstvo organization represented a semblance of an intellectuals' party, but it was moderate, even timid in the absence of a strong revolutionary movement, and could cherish no hope of ever reconstructing Russia without the aid of the masses.

The liberation of Russia must come from the ranks of the people. This was the creed of the intellectuals for generations and generations. Hence the great yearning for mass action. Hence the odd fact that in 1881 the intellectuals of the party "Land and Freedom," whose members had assassinated Tzar Alexander II, hailed the first pogroms in Southern Russia as a sign of the awakening of the masses against those whom they

considered their oppressors.* Hence all the attempts of the intellectuals to carry the revolutionary propaganda to the workingmen and the peasants.

When the revolution approached, the intellectuals found themselves affiliated with either the workmen or the peasants. In the first case they demanded an eight-hour work-day, social insurance, freedom of labor unions, and, as a guarantee for those reforms, political freedom. In the second case they demanded socialization or municipalization of the land, and, as a way of achieving these reforms, they called for a political revolution. In the first case they "took the standpoint of the working-class," in the second they "took the standpoint of the peasants," as this attitude was called in the revolutionary jargon. In either case they demanded things they did not need themselves. Leading the masses into revolutionary battles, they knew the fruits of victory would be for themselves of only indirect value.

This gives a clue to the difference between the two major forces of the revolution: the workingmen and peasants on one side, the intellectuals on the other. It was not only a difference of education or modes of living. It was a fundamental difference in the attitude towards the revolution. It was a difference of psychological keys. The workingmen and peasants sought in the revolution a realization of their *class-interests,* which meant primarily material gain. The intellectuals sought in the revolution a realization of political freedom, which meant primarily *immaterial values.* The workingmen and peasants strove to shatter the chains of physical bondage. The intellectuals strove to free the human soul.

The attitude of the workingmen and peasants towards the revolution was a direct one. Thought and action

* This aberration of political vision was very brief and of no injurious consequences. It is cited here only to illustrate the passionate longing of revolutionary intellectuals for the awakening of the mute masses to any action whatever.

were inseparable with them. In their actions they knew no doubt and no circumspection. Their understanding of the revolution, not excluding the more enlightened among them, was simple, even primitive. Everything was clear and plain to them. They knew no sophistication. They were quite themselves on all the stages of the movement.

The attitude of the intellectuals towards the revolution was a resultant of many lines of will and thought and emotion. The intellectual felt the call of the revolution as a categorical imperative of his immortal soul, and at the same time he was keenly aware of the fact that he was *sacrificing* himself for a high human ideal. The intellectual came into the revolution with a deep longing for the realization of the true, the beautiful and the good. The intellectuals brought into the revolution all the philosophical groupings of a never satisfied mind; all the religious aspirations of a people afflicted with a passionate longing for their God; all the doubts and queries and joys and desperations of a soul entangled in the problems of life and death; all the gamut of pains and delights of a deeply sincere heart vacillating between the twilight of security and the fierce blaze of danger; all the songs and vibrations and cravings of human emotions leading from nowhere to a land resplendent with the brightest colors in the human imagination. There were intellectuals who came into the revolution because they had a strong sense of social justice, and there were intellectuals who joined the battle because it seemed cowardly to stay away when the others were sacrificing the prime of their lives; there were intellectuals who were drawn into the organization by a vision of beauty in human relations, and there were intellectuals who were driven into the ranks by the emptiness of their private lives. Some went into the revolution out of youthful daring, some out of despair; some out of strength, others out of weakness; some were creating a new world in the processes of fighting, some were

hiding from themselves. In general, the intellectual revolutionists were under fire *as individuals,* each prevailed upon by his own spiritual motives, all together creating a new political order which to them was only *the shell* of what they were seeking. It is quite obvious that the intellectual was an extremely complicated phenomenon, and that it is harder to define the *type* of the intellectual revolutionist than any other.

The most conspicuous difference between the workingman and the intellectual is that the former takes the revolutionary movement for granted, while the other reflects; the former is all volition, the latter is often meditative; the former finds himself in active concert with his fellow-workingmen as a single instrument finds its place in the totality of an orchestra, the latter gropes for himself in himself. Hence the varied dramas of the soul of the intellectual revolutionist.

"Why fight?" a young revolutionary student asks himself in a story by V. Dmitrieva, *Cloudlets.* And he answers, it is the same as draining a swamp which poisons the air of your house. "Imagine in the vicinity of my house a vast suppurating malodorous bog. It poisons the air I breathe and impairs my comfort. Will you laugh at me if I start out to drain it and plant it with flowers?"

"Of course not," his friend replies.

"In order to accomplish it I shall have to dig canals, to stand knee-deep in fetid water, to suffer the bites of mosquitoes, leeches and other nasty creatures the swamp is bristling with. Will you for this call me an 'ascetic idealist'? Will you say: 'What a fool! Why torture himself if he can easily shut the windows of his house with shutters so that the nuisance does not bother him?'"

"There is no asceticism in this action," he continues. "You can easily shut the windows of your house, but the miasma will penetrate through the cracks in the shutters.

A human being with sensitive nerves can never enjoy his comfort when the air around him is foul."

This is perhaps the most primitive conception of the revolution in intellectual circles. The revolution is only a matter of comfort. *I* cannot enjoy life because other people are oppressed. *I* cannot eat my meal while the swamp exhales an unhealthy odor. Therefore I have to stand the mosquito bites and the leeches, and clean the ground. Once the feat is accomplished I shall return to my table and eat my bread and butter comfortably. I expect that nothing will disturb me after that.

It is a primitive conception, yet the psychological processes leading its adherents into the revolutionary fire are more complicated than those of Pavel Vlasov or Andrey Nachodka. After all, if the intellectual wishes, he *can* shut his windows and be safe. It is only a desire for *harmony* that urges him to go and fight revolutionary battles.

In most of the cases the conceptions are finer and more subtle.

V. Veresayev is the well-known Russian writer who devoted his charming talent to depicting the soul-dramas of the intellectuals in the various stages of Russian social life. His stories give precious insights into the attitude of the intellectual towards the revolution.

Here is a group of intellectuals about the beginning of the twentieth century (in the *Turning Point*): Tokaryov, an ex-revolutionist, not long ago returned from Siberian exile; Tanya, his sister, a young girl who has been studying in a college, but has left it for the sake of being "free"; Varya, an assistant physician in a Zemstvo hospital; Sergey, her brother, a student. Of all this little circle, only Tokaryov, a man over thirty, begins to think of his material well-being. As to the others, they are totally indifferent to their career, their comfort, their physical surroundings. Every one of them has to do some work to earn a living, but this is some-

thing external, it is an unavoidable evil. "Why have you quit college?" Tokaryov asks his sister, whom he has not seen for some time. "What do I need it for?" Tanya replies. "College is good only at the beginning, to get the proper connections. Once you have them, why stick to it?"

"But college gives systematic knowledge!"

Tanya laughs mirthfully.

"No, it does not give systematic knowledge, it gives a diploma. I am not sixteen, I can acquire knowledge without the professor's pointer."

"Strange. You were a senior already. What harm would a diploma do you? Why not have it for cases of emergency in the future?"

"Ah, how boresome it is to think of the future! I am not afraid of any future. I shall be able to live anyway, even without a diploma. And besides, didn't you leave your medical school a year before graduation?"

Tokaryov is beaten with his own weapon. When he was younger he cared as little about external things as Tanya.

What unites this circle is a profound interest in social problems. The latest convention of the German Social-Democratic Party is for them a vital topic of conversation. The controversy between orthodox Marxism and Revisionism absorbs them profoundly. They all believe in the coming revolution. They all consider it their duty to work for the revolution. And all of them are anxious to notice the first indications of a popular upheaval.

Here they are walking in the fields, seven or eight intellectuals spending their summer vacation in the provincial town. A storm is gathering. Lightnings flash through the dark sky. Varya exclaims:

"I love the storm! How beautiful! It lifts me up. It is so resolute, indubitable, creative. Under the storm, no hesitation, no questioning seems to be possible. All that you do is good, necessary, just what you ought to do.

And how wonderful it is to act, to have no reflections, as you are seized and carried forth by a great momentous power!"

Tanya remarks that times *are* stormy, but Varya disagrees.

"No, where is the storm? For a moment it seemed that something was happening. It turned out to be a mirage. Now everything is dark and gloomy again. Everything is shallow, drowsy, meek. The wave did not come, that great wave which uplifts men and makes them forget themselves, which strengthens the weak, which effaces doubts, which makes the spirit grow. The road was found, but it turned out to be a book-road."

"A book-road!" Tanya exclaims. "Are you blind? Don't you see what is going on?"

"I am sure I see everything. There are faint beginnings, hints, not more. Do you remember Dostoyevski's remarks on the 'eternal wanderer,' the Russian intellectual, and his drama? Not long ago it seemed as if the problem was finally solved, the wanderer stopped being a wanderer, a tremendous elementary power was rising from below to join hands with him. But has it happened? There is a difference, of course, times have changed, but the changes are only slight. Now, as before, we are *kings in the realm of ideas and homeless wanderers in life.*"

Young Sergey thinks it outrageous to be dependent upon a mysterious "elementary power." He does not want to worship this crude god—mass-movement. He wants to rely upon himself and those who belong to his class. But the others reasonably argue that vanguards are good only when there are rearguards to back them up and that a number of Sergeys would be unable to shatter the ancient walls.

And so they discuss the eternal problems of the revolution, those seven or eight young men and women, who have happened to meet in a small provincial town during

their summer vacation. So they were discussing these problems all over Russia, hardly believing that the revolution was at hand, that the great "elemental power" was actually rising.

It is almost pathetic to observe the circle of intellectuals in the company of a representative of the "masses." Valuyev, an old acquaintance of Tokaryov's, a workingman connected with revolutionary workmen circles, happens to stop for a day in the little town to meet his friend. There is nothing extraordinary about this new son of the "people." He had been illiterate till twenty, then he became interested in reading, then he became familiar with revolutionary ideas, which he understands very crudely. It seems that he is not doing any particular work for the revolution, he is just more enlightened than his fellow-workingmen and has revolutionary connections. But how deeply he stirs the imagination of the intellectual circle! How attentively they listen to his utterances! How painstakingly they scrutinize his manners, his figure, his gestures, his hands. He comes to them from another planet, he brings to them a message of a new future, he is the token of a coming revolution! What he says, his negation of theory, the philosophy of selfishness he is preaching is not above platitude, but the young intellectuals are impressed, moved, overwhelmed. "A new man!" "A new psychology!" "A new mental order!"

When the "wave" becomes more perceptible, all these young men and women, with the exception, perhaps, of Tokaryov, will plunge into it with all the ardor and religious ecstasy of their souls.

For the time being only Tanya is strongly attracted to the movement. She is the typical young revolutionary. She needs action. She abhors stagnation. She is ready to do any work, great or small, for the people. Before coming to the town she had helped famine-stricken peasants in one of the counties. She has spent there the last

penny of her slight allowance, she has given the last grain of her energy. Back in town, she has no money and no work, but she is indifferent to privation. It is not even asceticism; Tanya simply does not feel the lack of comfort.

In decision and action she is like a flash. She believes in the near storm, she feels it with her sensitive nerves. Her soul is like a beautiful musical instrument with a multitude of fine strings. It responds to every call from the great realms of life. It sounds charming tones, full of harmonious hope.

Life is a holiday for Tanya, her revolutionary work a holy sacrifice in the glorious temple of life. What she does is not dictated by duty. She does it because it gives her pleasure, because it is the highest realization of life. In her manners she is brusque, straightforward, nonchalant. This is due to her being too much absorbed in her thoughts, ideas and plans, to care much for external things. She has an innate aversion to compromises, and a quiet, moderate, " settled down " life is unthinkable to her.

Tanya cannot conceive of death. She does not feel it. " I cannot reconcile myself with death," she says. " To live, to act, to strive, to breathe, and all of a sudden to be interrupted when everything is so beautiful and absorbing." No, she has no place for death in her scheme of things.

Tanya is one of those pioneers who went into the workmen quarters to spread the revolutionary ferment among the people. She does not wait for the " masses " to come to her. She does not theorize about the " wave." She does not look for the initiative of an organization. She seizes every opportunity to get connected with the working-people. She makes acquaintances in the streets or in the railway trains. She speaks to her new friends of her heart's desire, and her sincerity conquers, because it is the truth. Tanya is one of those

revolutionary personalities who cheered the stern revolutionary work by their genial smile, who made the prison-walls appear brighter to her fellow-prisoners by the carefree tone of her songs, who marched in the first ranks at open demonstrations to address words of fraternity to armed soldiers, and who, red flag in uplifted hands, encouraged her comrades to hold the barricades in the open street-fight, till a bullet struck her young breast and she fell, mingling her red blood with the red of the revolutionary banner.

In the autumn Tanya leaves for Petersburg. Her brother sees her to the train. On his way back he visualizes her face, mobile, energetic, with big and daring, almost challenging eyes. "Strange," the author says, "he knew very well she was going on a perilous road with no rest or comfort. Yet he felt no fear for her future, it seemed to him he would have no pity, either. On the contrary, he experienced a burning envy at her greed for life and fearlessness in the face of life."

Tokaryov himself is a man who has lost not his creed, but his impulse for action. He is faithful to the ideas of his youth, he admires those who are capable of self-sacrifice, he thinks it the only worthy task in human life, but something is lacking in him. "I am afraid to look into myself," he says. "I feel something disappearing, something tremendously necessary, without which there is no life. The immediate feeling is waning, nothing can take its place. I am growing more indifferent towards nature. There is a wall rising between me and the rest of the people." Tokaryov knows full well that this is moral death, but he is unable to oppose it. It is as if a man knows he is becoming insane and has no power to stem the inevitable.

Tokaryov has not changed his ideas, but still he is offended by the manners and behavior of the younger generation. He is cooler. He is more tolerant. He can understand compromising. He admits the necessity of

choosing the lesser evil. He disagrees with young Sergey, who insists on an uncompromising policy, who declares that "honest people must prove by word and action that infamy is infamy, just as dishonest people prove that infamy is the noblest thing." No, Tokaryov cannot accept this straight line of conduct. It seems to him the world could not exist under such rules. He argues, yet he cannot help thinking how much beauty and truth there is in the youthful daring.

Tokaryov believes in the revolution. But here he visits an old friend, a member of the Zemstvo, who leads the quiet, comfortable life of a landlord, and he envies the security and the ease of his existence. "How good it is to live this way!" he thinks. "A beautiful wife, white and graceful. In summer-time a country mansion with branching lime-trees, with a white cloth over the table, with guests riding home in cabs through the darkness. In winter a cosy study, with green plants, Turkish divans and a big desk. All this should be illuminated by broad social activities, absorbing all the abilities of a man, justifying his existence and at the same time demanding no great sacrifices."

There is nothing unusual in such dreams in times of peace, yet they are incompatible with revolutionary activities. Tokaryov knows it and feels the humiliation of his new inclinations, yet he cannot soar again.

He knows he is doomed. He looks upon himself as upon a disease-stricken man who is rotting alive.

"Something had happened with his soul," the author says, "something was crushed, forever. Contempt for danger was gone, carelessness for the future was gone. In front of him everything was dreary, cold and turbid. He remembered his dreams of a mansion, of a comfortable life, and the idea was repulsive to him. Why? . . . To live in the ordinary way, without a great task that gives life meaning and value? Ever more clearly he saw now that life without meaning and value was im-

possible and that, once a value had been recognized, one should be able to sacrifice everything for it. If a man, however, combines the question of life's value with the question of a budget and a career, it is better that he should stop thinking of values. And Tokaryov became ashamed of himself."

Tokaryov hates the young uncompromising Sergey as a sinner hates his conscience, yet he cannot stop discussing with him the problems of his own life. In a moment of frankness he says to him:

"Listen. I am an ordinary man. I was destined to live quietly and humbly, not to mingle in things, to have no serious problems, to go on like everybody around me, earning money in one way or another, cursing the work which sustains me, propagating my kind and playing cards in the evening. But, you see: there is a time in the life of even the swampiest soul when it becomes transformed, it feels wings growing. Under favorable conditions its unclear yearnings shape themselves into a striving towards a definite ideal. Then the man goes to fight, to perish for his ideal, believing no life to be possible without a great aim and a great life's problem. But then a few years pass. The wings dry and fall down, the man shrivels. The cherished aims become strange and dead to him. This is the stage I am in now. But the trouble is that I have been poisoned by my past, I am frightened by the void I am facing, I cannot live without an aim or a meaning. My wings are gone, and I cannot lift myself above the swamp. . . . What can give me power to lead a human life? Philosophy? Religion? My very soul is rolling out of me, can you understand it? My soul is rolling out! . . . How can I retain it?"

This cry of agony was ringing for generations and generations in the night of Russian life. Human souls felt the necessity of action while circumstances doomed them to live in the morass. Human souls had visions of beautiful ideas while life was continually robbing them of the

will-power to fight for their ideals. This was the ordinary biography of a Russian intellectual: at twenty, an ardent revolutionist (in theory), repudiating compromises (in discussions with his friends), cherishing the most novel social ideals; at twenty-five, a county physician, or a teacher, or an agriculturist, or a public-service officer, trying to be progressive and human, and being handicapped at every step by the bureaucratic machinery and the indolence of so-called "society"; at thirty, a "tired" man, exhausted by the unequal struggle, disgusted by his failures, gradually yielding to the habits of his surroundings, drinking whisky and playing cards every evening out of sheer boresomeness; at thirty-five, a moral wreck, assimilated by his environment beyond recognition, and yet *knowing* that he is a victim, *feeling* in his innermost being the call of beauty and truth, and *longing* for another life, full of storms and bright light. Russian literature presents a long series of biographies of this kind, from Gontcharov's *Oblomov* to the "twilight-people" of Tchechov. In a sense, Versayev's Tokaryov is the *last* of his kind. Times *did* become stormy very soon, and most of the Tokaryovs were drawn into the revolutionary whirl. Yet even in the midst of the great struggle, holding responsible positions, leading and being led by the course of tremendous events, people of this kind remained essentially the same. The inheritance of generations of intellectuals weighed heavily on their shoulders.

Tokaryov has no power to die. He tries it, but it disgusts him. Varya is stronger. She cannot even complain that her life is empty. She is an assistant physician in a hospital, devoted to her work, enjoying the love and gratitude of her patients and the recognition of the Zemstvo. In her work Varya knows no compromises. She is imperiling her life every day in her care for the sick peasants, and she does not think of it. She performs a splendidly heroic deed in entering the cell of a hydrophobic man to quench his thirst with a drink of beer.

Yet, when the Zemstvo resolves to express its gratitude for her conscientious and loving attitude towards the patients, she is upset. "How can one thank a person for doing her duty?" she indignantly exclaims. "It is ridiculous! I am not working for the Zemstvo, and I am indifferent whether it approves or disapproves of my actions."

Varya has every reason to be satisfied with her life. But she suffers from the same mental affliction as Tokaryov. "Something is drying in me," she says to Tokaryov, "just as a branch of a tree dries. The form, the outward appearance remain the same, nothing seems to have happened, yet the flexibility is gone, life is gone, the branch is dry to the core. So it is with me. Everything is the same: my views, my aims, my endeavors, but the spirit is gone. . . . I have no desire to give myself entirely, restlessly, though I don't value my own life." . . .

It is not the fear of death that moves Varya, it is the lack of a keen, absorbing interest in life. Having realized this, Varya makes an end to her life. She purposely contracts a dreadful disease and dies quietly as she has lived. Had she endured a few years longer, she might have felt the throbbing of a new life in the country and experienced a resurrection. Or perhaps she would have sought in the revolution refuge from herself and carried the feeling of void with her into the very heart of the battle. The name of Varya's kind was legion.

# CHAPTER XXIX

## "PROFESSIONAL REVOLUTIONISTS"

"DURING his stay abroad, Andrey Bolotov experienced the anxiety of the head of a household who has intrusted it to strangers. The tremendous party, with branches all over Russia, with dynamite shops, secret presses, terrorist-groups, territorial and provincial committees, peasants' brotherhoods, workmen's associations, students' circles, officers' and soldiers' unions, with its successes, defeats, strikes, demonstrations, intrigues and arrests, seemed to him to be a great complicated household demanding constant vigilance. He did not understand that his comrades (of the Central Committee) also had an idea of the party as a prosperous household, belonging, however, not to Bolotov, but to each one of them. Had he understood this, he would not have changed. He would not have stopped feeling the only thing which gave him power to work and live 'illegally,' i.e., to work and live without a family, without a home and to expect prison or death without fear. Only the deeply rooted conviction that the party was the mother of the revolution and that he, Andrey Bolotov, was the most faithful, most obedient, most valiant of its members, this conviction alone that without him, the household master, the party would fall to pieces and the household would become impoverished, gave him power to live the way he did. And, therefore, he had no rest, he experienced the uneasiness that is known to every head of a household."

Thus V. Ropshin,* in his story *A Thing That Never*

*Ropshin is the literary name of Boris Savenkov, one time head of the terrorist groups of the Social-Revolutionary Party, then a writer of repute. In August, 1917, he became minister in the Kerenski cabinet.

*Happened,* describes a type known in the revolutionary circles as a "professional revolutionist." Andrey Bolotov is a nobleman, the son of a general, a man of high culture and education. But Andrey Bolotov never thinks of himself, never plans his own private life. Andrey Bolotov is an *instrument of his party.* He has identified himself wholly with the organization.

"The hard days when he had known the sensation of fear, had passed long ago," the author says. "As a sailor gets used to the sea and does not think of being drowned; as a soldier gets used to war and does not think of being killed; as a physician gets used to typhoid fever or consumption and does not think of becoming infected, so Bolotov got used to his nameless life and did not think he could be hanged. Deep in his lulled soul, however, there lived a dark, uneasy feeling, such as never leaves the sailor, the physician or the soldier. Obedient to the urge of this feeling Bolotov unconsciously, out of mere boresome habit, followed the rules of 'conspiracy.' He did not hide from relatives or friends, he simply could not understand how it was possible to meet friends or relatives when it was not necessary, just for pleasure. He did not observe reticence with regard to the party affairs, he simply could not understand how it was possible to discuss them with strangers. He did not shun new people he came across, but he did not conceive how it was possible to trust any mere stranger. He did not notice that all his relations with people, from the janitor to his father and mother, were based on fear, on an eagerness to conceal from them the particulars of the life which interested him most. Had he seen it, he would not have been able to lead another life."

Twice a week Andrey Bolotov attends the meetings of the Central Committee, which is the highest administrative and intellectual apparatus of the party. The Central Committee decides about current political tactics; the

Central Committee votes on strikes, demonstrations, attempts on the life of officials and other revolutionary manifestations. The decisions of the Central Committee are considered the decisions of the party and are faithfully carried out by local committees and single individuals as far as circumstances permit. Andrey Bolotov and his colleagues have a firmly established view on the relation between their party and the people, between their party and the truth. Their organization can never be wrong,—this is an idea bred by the constant sacrifices the maintenance of the party requires, and warranted by the incessant growth of the party. On the other hand, the party is the legitimate leader of the people. The party knows the needs of the people better than any individual can know them. The party sees clearly the way of emancipation. The party has worked out methods of political action. The party is therefore entitled to appeal to the people in times of crises and to expect their support.

The author of *The Thing That Never Happened* is somewhat critical of the self-confidence of the members of the Central Committee. "In a crowded smoky room," he says, "they discussed the question as to whether an armed insurrection should be started or not. They were sure the fate of two thousand soldiers depended upon the outcome of their discussion. They forgot that if people resolve to kill others, to rebel, to die, they do not do so because five men unknown to them declare it to be good, useful and necessary, but they are moved by a multitude of accidental causes which cannot be foreseen." The author is right when he emphasizes the fact that armed rebellions are not a result of a committee decision; the members of the "party," however, are also justified in their belief that the party ought to frame slogans and to be in the first ranks when popular upheavals occur.

Thus, for the "professional revolutionist" the party

is the center of the country, perhaps the center of the entire world. All his interests are connected with the party, all his ambitions are the ambitions of the party. The party is infinitely more than a political co-operation of men and women pursuing the same ends: the party is the *home* of the individual revolutionist.

This is true not only of a leading intellectual like Bolotov, but also of those who are being led—the members of the local committees. Here is David, the head of a committee in a small country town. "David experienced the same uneasy feeling of the head of a household as did Bolotov," the author says. "His household, however, was not the party as a whole. In fact, he knew very little about the party: just the noisy, unimportant topics they were discussing in the party press. He knew that all over Russia there were people, dear comrades, who hated the same things that he hated and demanded the same things that he demanded. He knew, further, that there were committees at work in every town and that the committees and their 'political affairs,' as he deemed them, were guided from Petersburg by worthy, experienced and wise leaders. Those leaders he trusted blindly. He never questioned who they were or who gave them their unlimited powers. It was soothing to know that there was somebody in the world and that this 'somebody' was vigilantly guarding the interests of the party and would not allow them to be injured. Not knowing the party, he thought it stronger, greater and purer than it really was. As to his household feeling he exercised it in his little town, whose local committee seemed to him to be a complicated, prosperous household. . . . He faithfully believed in the invincible power of the party and, just like Bolotov, looked forward to the 'day of storm,' as he called it, 'the great day of reward.'"

The "professional revolutionist" developed certain features of character quite unusual in every-day life. The professional revolutionist is an extreme absolutist within

the limits of his own party. The Central Committee decides to remove a revolutionist from one town to another,—he silently obeys, thinking it beneficial for the party. A member of the Central Committee visits a local committee,—the members willingly follow all his advice. A member of the local committee orders the "rank and file" to carry out certain decisions—such as distribution of literature, strikes, manifestations, etc.—the orders are punctiliously carried out. The necessity of "conspirative secrecy" makes the organization look somewhat like a military camp on the battle-front, where personal sympathies, emotions, tastes are put aside for the common cause.

The "professional revolutionist" is glad to adapt himself to this rigid discipline. Usually a high-strung intellectual, with a vivid imagination, he purposely curbs many of his desires and inclinations which might impair his aptitude for the party work. He disposes of all harrowing questions, he simply drives them away, because there is no time to question fundamentals while you are in the midst of a fight. He shuts his eyes to the motives of men joining the revolution, because an insight into individual souls may prove embarrassing in using revolutionists as "human material" to feed the party. He breaks off family relations and all private connections so as to be free and so that he may be justified in demanding the same from others.

"Professional revolutionists" were essentially the same in all the parties. Naturally, they were intolerant as regards other organizations. Naturally, they were so much wrapped up in their own painfully reared child —the party—that all the other parties, the revolutionary not excluded, were to them either utopian, or too moderate, or even detrimental to the revolution. Hence the bitter factional struggles inside of the revolutionary army.

A type of a "professional revolutionist" appears in Veresayev's *Towards Life*. Dr. Rosanov is the leader of

the labor party and is known in revolutionary Russia. He is persistently searched by the police, but he never gives up work. When he comes to a local committee to "straighten out things," he puts new life into the organization. On his travels he has to change his appearance and take all kinds of precautionary measures, but he cannot conceal his big head, his broad shoulders, his deep-set, green eyes, his masterful look.

"I did not like this man," a member of the local committee remarks. "I felt he was a despot, a sectarian fanatic all wrapped up in factional squabbles. During those days, however, he suddenly grew to be a tribune. The soul of the crowd was in his hands, as a wild horse in the hands of its rider. When he mounted a box and waved his hand, the stormy sea would calm down and dead silence ensue. His brows were knit, his eyes aflame, his speech masterful.

"I could not make sure whether his policy was good, I understood nothing for the suddenness of the hurricane. Yet his iron will conquered me as it conquered all the others. I followed him blindly. He could have sent us all to death and we would have followed, believing that it was the proper thing to do."

Dr. Rosanov looks upon the local committees as upon so many families of his children, and their members are to him brothers and sisters. Here he finds in the room of one of the revolutionists Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy,* and is unpleasantly surprised. Reading Nietzsche is not a thing that befits an active revolutionist. Reading Nietzsche indicates that a man is groping in the dark, that he is dissatisfied with the solution his party gives to the most vital problems. Dr. Rosanov treats a reader of Nietzsche as a patient who has become afflicted with a contagious disease. To him all problems are settled. Doubts and queries affect him as unwelcome, disturbing nonsense.

And yet, being a professional revolutionist did not

make an intellectual immune against doubts and spiritual dramas. One of those dramas is the subject of Veresayev's *Towards Life*. Kostya is certainly a beautiful specimen of the professional revolutionist. He addresses mass-meetings on factory premises, feeling as if he were scattering handfuls of seeds which instantly turned into "glorious flowers of brotherhood and young, creative hatred." He calls for general strikes, and the movement grows under his hands. He bravely faces an attack of Cossacks on a gathering of workingmen in the woods where he has been speaking. He writes proclamations which are distributed through the town to instigate the revolutionary movement. He writes in his diary: "It is wonderful to live! The waves are rising ever higher!"

Kostya is young and strong. Kostya is very gifted. He is a powerful orator and very clever at debates with opponents. He is quite indifferent to dangers. He feels with every fiber that single individuals are of no great value, that "something tremendous exists, some common cause." "Let the horses trample over my wounded body to-morrow, it is nothing," he thinks, without humility or arrogance.

He is on the crest of a high wave of revolutionary unrest as well as of feverish personal energy. And in the midst of it all he feels as it were a mass of strange monsters crawling within him, lifting their flat, trembling heads. Questions stir his mind, ages old, grave questions take possession of him.

"Why live?"

"I look at those two words," he writes, "and I am almost ashamed. They seem so naïve and trite, like the production of a high-school boy. But this is the dreadful part of it. They look funny not because the answer is unknown to high-school boys only, but because only high-school boys still hope to obtain an answer. There is no answer. Yet people go on living."

"Why live?"

"I asked the thinkers, the creators," Kostya writes. "What could they give me? The fighters, the saints, the creators, they have lived and they always will live in their gropings, in their pains, in the ecstasy of victories and the tragedy of defeats. But how about the little people, the insignificant ones? How about the human weeds? Why should they live? Everybody does live. There must be something common to all. It is impossible that the meaning of the life of different people should be incommensurable."

Kostya loses the taste for life. He cannot understand how people continue living with this question unsolved. Why live? Why do the drudgery of life day in, day out? Kostya visits his friends of the working-class. They are poor, but they are so firmly planted on the ground, they possess so much self-sufficiency, they seem *to know* the meaning of it all. They look forward, they believe in the future.

"What does it matter if somebody will be happy in the future?" Kostya asks. "That does not make life easier. Still they live. What for?" Isn't it better that all human beings should make an end to their lives?

In the further development of his mental crisis Kostya begins to doubt the efficiency of the instrument through which he expects to find a solution. He is horrified to discover that his *reason* is not an independent, reliable entity. Reason! It changes with the substance of the brain, with the coincidence of circumstances. Reason is dictated by the subconsciousness. How can he command it?

Kostya's tragedy widens. He cannot act. He is paralyzed. He is in the grip of some evil spirit.

"I have lost myself. I have utterly lost myself, like a needle in dry grass. Where am I? What am I? I feel my soul has left me. My soul has torn itself from

my consciousness, it has sunk into the depths. Something stretches its tentacles out of the dark, taking hold of my brain, my poor powerless brain incapable of life. My body has become strange to me.

"Where am I? Where is my own self? Where is my freedom, my self-causality? Is it in that which thinks, which is aware of itself—in my 'reason'? But why are all its independent thoughts so meager and lifeless, why are the words born by it so dry and limited? Only when gripped by these strange tentacles out of the dark does it become alive. The tighter the grip of the tentacles, the deeper my reason becomes, the more active it is. Thought becomes bright, full of creative power, words are luminous with a thrilling sense.

"Am I there, in the darkness, in the depths? Yet I know there is a dark slave there, I feel it now clearly. The mighty Master of my consciousness is the slave of a Ruler whom I do not know. The Ruler reigns over it, over humanity, over the whole of life. He is stern and implacable, the King of all powers!"

In agony, in torment Kostya exclaims: "I do not want it! I cannot accept it! In the grip of the clutching tentacles of my Master-slave, in the darkness enveloping me, I cry to thee, Unknown, to thee, Ruler of mine and of my Master: I do not want it! I am free! I shall not submit!"

But over and over again the torment of these problems takes hold of the man, and he is shattered. Things lose their interest for him. His work, which is part of his life, is under question like the totality of his life. What does a speech, a revolutionary pamphlet, a strike amount to in the face of those eternal questions? Here his comrades are discussing the May-day celebration; young and old women have been embroidering flags the night through; the workingmen are as active and assured as ever. But Kostya refuses to participate in the celebration. Some of his comrades suspect he is afraid of being

arrested, but the truth is that he is indifferent to everything.

"With envy I listen to their speeches," he writes. "There is something momentous about them, something earnest and full of meaning, while within my soul everything is dried up, for me life has withdrawn from these matters they are discussing. Only words remain, hackneyed old words, nauseatingly boresome."

Kostya tries to follow the philosophy of "carpe diem," to drown his anguish in sensual pleasures, but he never can deaden the worm that gnaws at the roots of his very existence.

Kostya is on the verge of suicide. People of a weaker mental constitution might have succumbed to their despair. Kostya survives. After severe struggles, after having changed his mode of life and his surroundings, he feels again the lure of life. He puts aside all these poignant problems. He discovers the simple yet infinitely significant truth that when a person has the keen sensation of life, all queries "Why live" seem artificial and academic. Kostya awakens one evening to feel the genuine taste for life. He is in a beautiful valley where nature weaves the endless fabric of life. Everything breathes, everything is saturated with the joy of life, drinking life from the ground, from the air, from infinity. A holy mystery of life is being celebrated in the green valley under the red rays of a mild setting sun.

Kostya has found himself. It happens as unexpectedly and seemingly as much without reason, as his former discovery of his Master, the slave of the Unknown. Kostya is again filled with the thrill of desire for action. He will return to his comrades. He will put his hand to the common cause, which to him has become doubly precious. He has proved to himself that he has the power to stand the hardest of all tests, to win victory over himself.

Not all intellectuals, however, are of the same elastic

material. The main hero of the *Blooming Apple-Trees* by O. Mirtov proved to be of small use to his party. He was driven into the revolutionary ranks not by desire to serve his people or to see beauty triumphant in human relations, but by dread. An out and out individualist, he was always centered in himself, and the feeling that has haunted him from his early youth is fear of death. "I feel as if I were sentenced to death," he says to his old friend. He felt as if everything was slowly dying,—his relatives, his friends, nature. Death was narrowing its circle around him, his brain was burning, his nerves a-tremble. To save himself from insanity he flees to Petersburg and joins the revolutionary party, whose program and purposes are irrelevant to him. He has a last hope that readiness to give away his life in the service of the party will save him from his dread.

"I have done work for them," he tells later in a derisive tone. "They said I had 'capacity for work.' Sometimes I upset them by my absent-mindedness, but they readily forgave me, though absent-mindedness is a great sin in their occupation. They found I had a precious quality, *endurance.* Kostya even went so far as to say I had the ability to do more than carry out orders. In reality, I had no abilities whatsoever. I had been subject to fits of melancholy from my childhood on, and this was a way of curing myself in the wheel of life. The dread of death had thrown me into the wheel. This, however, I realized only later, when I was in prison. At that time I still did not know myself. It was only that I was afraid to be thrown out of the wheel; I closed my eyes and did everything. Whether I closed my eyes consciously or unconsciously does not matter. Yet this is my fault. This only. In fact, I was dead . . . notwithstanding my indignation which sometimes rose to a pitch of hatred, notwithstanding my energy. The fact is, I *welcomed* my indignation, I stimulated my emotions, which saved me from the problem of death. . . . To die quietly,

here in my quiet garden, the thought was dreadful to me. To die in a crowd, in the streets, if that happened, yes! but not there. This is the reason I created a life that gave me no time to think. I ran myself to exhaustion, so as to fall and momentarily sink into sleep. In a purely mechanical way I freed myself from the clutches of despair. I lived among those people, disguised in their garb. I rushed forward as if running down a mountain, never looking back, never able to stop. I found pleasure in my work, in this impetuous rush. I forgot myself, I did not know myself, I gladly let myself be hypnotized by the word 'freedom.' So much was my conscience already prepared, that I admitted theoretically the right to kill those who stood in the way of the people. . . . And then . . . the lot fell upon me to kill a man.

"I submitted. My first thought, my first consideration was that if I would not do it, somebody else would have to do it, and I had no right to impose my fate on others. This was all I thought of the subject. Somehow I managed *not to think*. When it flashed through my mind that I was going to die, I said to myself that death was inevitable sooner or later, and that it was better to die in a heroic exploit. This was my only answer to myself. The sensation of a hero saving his Fatherland and the sensation of a hangman were united in me. I was very energetic, even ingenious, in the preparatory work. I am ashamed of it now. How inconceivable a man can be! I remember how carefully I dressed half an hour before the catastrophe. . . . This was also part of the program. I had to be elegant. I remember that I removed a tiny feather from my sleeve and carefully scrutinized my black frock coat, as a hangman would scrutinize his new red blouse. I was so much absorbed by those salutary particulars that I even forgot what I was going to do. Only the revolver recalled it to my mind.

"It was the poise of a corpse. *I*, my real *I*, did not exist. I remember the great agitation in Kostya's face

when he shook hands with me for the last time. I was calm. The feelings of a judge, a hero, and a hangman were intertwined inseparably within me and deadened my soul. Not only did I play my rôle exceedingly well, I seemed to have become a new man.

"It happened in the theater. All the time I was looking at *him* from a distance, he did not exist in my mind as a human being. He was only a target I beheld before taking aim. I waited for the fixed moment, and when I saw him *moving,* I calmly rose to my feet and followed. As I was told by *somebody,* I stopped behind his back. I was not told what to do by the comrades; no, I was left to myself at that moment, I had to act according to my own initiative, my own understanding of the situation. This spoiled their undertaking. When I saw the white line of his collar, the warm back of his neck, fat and flabby, when I felt the warmth of the neck, *he* suddenly became *alive.* . . . He began to exist in himself, quite apart from what he had done and what I was going to kill him for. In front of me was the back of his neck. I looked, my hand in my pocket. . . . The hangman looked. My consciousness was split in two, as it were. I caught the sound of his voice. He was speaking to somebody. I cannot describe what I was feeling. I know just this, that *I went through the experience of killing.* I experienced the thing which had to happen yet never did, owing perhaps, to the mere fact that it so clearly happened in my imagination. I felt an *unspeakable disgust and dread at the thought that death was emanating from me.* I *had* done the killing, I had done it by a supreme effort of my imagination. Now I know why nearly everybody can kill in war and almost nobody—this way. In war you have no time to feel the warmth of his neck. . . . I do not know how long it lasted, I remember I took out the revolver.* When I came to, I was in the hands of those who had seized me. My first feeling was happiness.

* Not to fire, however. M. O.

I was happy—I had killed nobody. He was alive. I saw him. My whole life changed at that moment. For the first time I experienced the real joy of life."

This is an extreme case. Not every intellectual in the ranks of the revolution had to commit terrorist acts. Yet this case is characteristic as regards the motives that drove hosts of intellectuals into the revolutionary parties. To be a professional revolutionist required as much talent and vocation, as any other responsible profession, and this only a few possessed in a satisfactory degree. All the others were more or less amateurs, undergoing all the hardships and disappointments amateurs are exposed to. There was a time when nearly every intellectual, for one reason or another, felt induced to help the revolutionary parties. Grave trials lay in wait for those who were not fit.

# CHAPTER XXX

## THE TERRORISTS

The history of the terrorist attempts is one of the most dramatic chapters in the history of the revolution, and offers the richest material for psychological studies. In it the romanticism of the revolutionary movement, the personal qualities of the revolutionists, the deepest inner conflicts appear as under a magnifying-glass.

The general characteristics of the terrorist type changed in the course of the revolution. The first terrorists, of the parties "Land and Freedom" and "People's Freedom" (in the 'seventies and early 'eighties), were persons of a high spiritual beauty, gifted with an extreme sensitiveness to the sufferings of the people, and living in a world of pure religious joy. The history of the men and women who planned and accomplished the assassination of Alexander II on March 1, 1881, is a history of ecstatic souls and adamant wills, with not a selfish thought and incapable of an instant of fear. The first terrorists of the beginning of the twentieth century, resuming the traditions of "Land and Freedom" after an intermission of about twenty years, resembled in many respects their predecessors of the 'seventies and 'eighties. Those terrorists were *volunteers* in the real sense of the word: they acted out of inner compulsion; their terrorist undertakings were the expression of a spontaneous moral elevation which made it impossible for them to witness the sufferings of the people and the baseness of the rulers without immediate response. At any rate, they acted under no compulsion from without. Later, when the revolutionary movement broadened and the Socialist-Revolutionary Party made terrorism part of

its program, which meant the creation of terroristic organizations, the type of the terrorist began to deteriorate. Young boys and girls with no high moral qualifications either made attempts on government officials single-handed, following the current of revolutionary excitement, or they joined the organization of terrorists, sometimes from mere motives of imitation, sometimes under moral pressure of their party colleagues, who thought participation in terrorist attempts the highest manifestation of voluntary spirit. The number of terrorists grew, their quality went down. Single-handed terrorists, when arrested and frightened by the gendarmes, often showed a lack of moral courage. Party terrorists, drawing salaries from the party treasury and spending idle months in waiting for a chance, turned out to be a very awkward sort of professionals. True, there were beautiful exceptions, among whom Ivan Kalyayev, the assassin of Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovitch, the uncle of Nicholas II, stands out as an example. In general, however, the terrorist organization became a sort of aristocratic division of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, its members looking upon themselves as revolutionary supermen and permitting themselves liberties condemned in ordinary life.

Still later, when the revolution was defeated and the white terror set in, the "expropriations" began. An expropriation was an armed attack of a number of individuals on a bank, a post-office, a store, sometimes a private residence, with the aim of "getting" money. The first expropriations were made by sincere revolutionists who meant to fill the treasury of their organization so as to facilitate the revolutionary work. Their example, however, was followed by individuals who were scarcely able to draw the line between public and private interests; and soon adventurers and all sorts of hunters for easy money joined in. The overwhelming majority of the expropriations had nothing to do with the revolution, yet their participants claimed to be revolutionists and to have acted

under the control of an organization. Spies and agents provocateurs found their way into the ranks of the expropriators, and the reputation of terrorism fell very low. Later it was found out that even at the blooming-period of the terrorist organization of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party it harbored a traitor, Azev, who was simultaneously the head of the organization and a secret agent in the service of the Police Department. There is no doubt that the terrorist groups were a favorable medium for treachery.

However, many terrorist acts played an important part in the development of the revolution. There were cases of terrorist attempts whose political significance not even the opponents of terrorism (such as were the Social-Democratic organizations) could deny. The assassination of Von Plehve started the "Era of Spring." The assassination of Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovitch, on February 4, 1905, made a tremendous impression in the country and abroad. The attempts on officials notorious for their cruelty satisfied the public sense of justice and created uneasiness in the ranks of the administration. The government, in its turn, hated the terrorists more than any other revolutionists, and wreaked wholesale vengeance upon them. Many an act which in times of peace would have been punished by a term of imprisonment was implacably avenged by death. The death chambers of the Russian prisons in 1906–08 saw scores of innocent men and women who had nothing to do with any terrorist acts blindly sacrificed on the altar of an infuriated autocratic Nemesis.

We shall quote here letters written by revolutionists who had been sentenced to death. Hardly any other documents give a better account of the mental processes of the fighters than these letters written on the threshold of death.

Leo Cohan-Bernstein was hanged in Siberia on August 7, 1889. He was sentenced to death, together with two

other revolutionists, for having resisted the administration's attempt to transfer him and a number of his fellow-exiles from Yakutsk to a more dreary and desolate place of exile. The guards had opened fire on the resisting revolutionists, six were killed, many wounded; the rest were tried and three put to death.

From his death chamber he writes:

"YAKUTSK, August 6, 1889.

*"My dear, dear friends and comrades:*

"I am not sure I shall be able to say good-by to you. There is almost no hope. In my mind, however, I have said good-by to all of you. All this time I have deeply felt your warm, sympathetic attitude toward me. I have only a little longer to live.

"Let us take leave of each other, dear friends and comrades, and let our last farewell be lit by the hope of a better future for our poor, poor motherland which lies so close to our heart. Not one atom of power has ever been lost in the universe. Not one human life can be lost in vain. Do not deplore human life. Let the dead take care of the dead—you have a whole life ahead of you, a moral, arduous life, sublime in communion with your suffering motherland! Do not say or think that your life is lost, that it will pass in useless suffering and torture, in prison-cell and exile. To suffer the pain of your motherland, to be a living denunciation of all the fiends of darkness and evil, is a great task. Even if it be your last service, what of it? We have brought our share to the altar of the struggle for the people's freedom. Who knows, perhaps you will live to see the great moment when our liberated motherland will meet her faithful, loving and beloved children with open arms and celebrate with you the great holiday of freedom.

"When this time comes, remember us in love.

"This will be our greatest reward for all our trials.

Let this great hope always be with you, as it will be with me on the very scaffold.

"I kiss you ardently, with all my loving soul.

"Altogether yours,

"L. BERNSTEIN.

"Once more, farewell, dear friends. I kiss you heartily. Yours,

"BERNSTEIN."

This letter was written in the darkest moment of recent Russian history, when, under the fierce reign of Alexander III, which stifled the breath of the country, all hope of a better future seemed to have vanished. On the day of the execution Leo Cohan-Bernstein was still sick in bed from wounds he had received in the conflict with the guards. He was carried with his bed to the scaffold, and while he was lying powerless on his pillow they put his head into the noose. The bed was then removed.

Nicholas Zotov, the second of the three hanged in Yakutsk, wrote, a few minutes before his execution:

"August 6/7, 3 A.M.

"In the back yard, near the lanterns, they are already planting the poles. We see how our scaffolds are being erected. How primitive it all is! About eight in the evening the priest visited me. I politely declined his services, assuring him that, to my sorrow, I did not expect anything beyond this life.

"Genya * has just visited me for the last time. She has watched my last moments and will describe them to you. It is impossible for me now to do so myself. I feel cheerful, my mood is bright, but I am terribly tired, physically, as well as nervously. For the last two days my nerves have worked monstrously! So many strong sensations!

"Now, my dear friends, my loving ones, for the very

* Zotov's bride.

last time I press you to my breast! I am dying with a perfectly light heart, conscious that I am right, feeling strength in my bosom. I am only horror-stricken to think of the fate of my dear ones who remain. What are my sufferings? Only a matter of a few hours; while theirs will last, and they need so much strength to stand it all. I can think of nothing else when I look at Genya.

"The guards have come; they have brought prison clothes; I have put them on. I am sitting in trousers and shirt and I am freezing (the trousers and the shirt are wet from the rain). Do not think my hand trembles from excitement. Good-by, good-by, my dear ones.

"Yours to the grave,

"KOLYA."

Stepan Balmashov was the student, twenty-one years of age, who, on April 2, 1902, assassinated the Russian Minister of the Interior, Sipyagin. On April 3rd he wrote his last letter to his parents, of whom the father had been a revolutionist and an exile in former years. The letter was written from prison (Balmashov was executed on May 3, 1902). Here is its text:

"My dear ones! I seize a happy opportunity. I write only a few lines, hoping they will reach you. The event of April 2nd and my participation in it must have stricken you with a shock of surprise and acute pain.

"But do not force upon me all the weight of your reproach! The implacable, merciless conditions of Russian life drove me to this act, compelled me to shed human blood, and, what is more, to inflict upon you, in your old age, the sorrow of the loss of your only son.

"How boundlessly happy I would be now, after having done my duty as a citizen of my country, if I were not depressed by the thought of your grief, your horrible anguish. In spite of all, in spite of the fact that my bright state of mind and my joyous feeling of having followed

the inescapable imperative of my conscience are clouded with bitterness by the thought of your affliction, I do not regret what I have done.

"It is not necessary for me, of course, to explain to you the importance of a fight against the most conspicuous, the harshest representatives of the autocratic régime. It is not necessary for me to tell you how inevitable sacrifices are in this fight. The hideous conditions of Russian life demand not only material sacrifices, they take their only children away from parents. I bring my life as a sacrifice for the great cause of relieving those who work and those who are oppressed, and this, I believe, gives me a moral justification for the cruelty I am committing in regard to you, my dear and beloved parents.

"Let the thought of the importance of my act soothe your natural parental grief. Inclosing this, I ask only one thing of you, though I know it is a hard condition to fulfil. Whatever happens to me, please be as firm and calm as I am. Perhaps your calm will be transmitted to me through the thick prison walls and will lessen my anxiety for you. Yours,

"STEPA."

Ivan Kalyayev, the assassin of Grand Duke Sergius, wrote from prison:

*"Dear friends and comrades:*

"You know I have done everything I could to make the 4th of February a victory. I am happy. I fulfilled a thing it was the duty of all bleeding Russia to do.

"You know my convictions and the strength of my feelings, and let none of you grieve over my death.

"I have given all of myself for the struggle of the working-people; there can be no concessions on my part to the autocracy; and if, as a result of all the endeavors of my life, I have been found worthy of making sublime protest for humanity against oppression, let my death crown my work through the purity of my ideal.

"To die for one's convictions means to call others to fight, and whatever may be the price of eliminating autocracy, I am firmly convinced our generation will put an end to it forever. It will be a great victory of Socialism when freedom opens new vistas before the Russian people, before all who suffer under the centuries-old violence of the Tzars.

"I am wholly with you, my dear, my loving friends. You were my support in hard moments; we always shared our joys and our sorrows, and if, some day, on the crest of the people's rejoicing, you recall my name, let all my revolutionary work be in your eyes the expression of my ecstatic love for the people and my proud adoration of you; let it be the toll of my sincere devotion to our party, which is faithful to the traditions of 'People's Freedom' in every sense.

"Life seems a fairy tale to me; it is as if all that has happened to me had existed from my early years in my forebodings and had lurked in the recesses of my heart, to be poured suddenly forth in a flame of hatred and vengeance on behalf of all.

"I should like to mention by name many people who are close to my heart and infinitely dear to me. Let my last breath be a farewell greeting for them and my vigorous appeal to fight for freedom.

"I embrace and kiss you all. Yours,

"I. KALYAYEV."

To his mother Ivan Kalyayev wrote:

*"My dear mother:*

"My state of mind is unchanged. I am happy to know I acted in obedience to the call of my duty. I kept my conscience clear and my convictions intact. You know very well I had no private life; if I suffered in life, it was the sufferings of others.

"It would be ridiculous to think of saving my life now,

when my end makes me so happy. I refused to sign the petition for pardon, and you know why. It was not because I have spent all my physical and mental powers; on the contrary, I have preserved all that life gave me for my last triumph in death. From my early boyhood I felt I was doomed, and there is nothing in my private life I could regret. I could not accept pardon because it is against my convictions. You, too, must accept my resolution with such courage as only a loving heart is capable of. Don't weep over me; be happy, as if I had not parted from you. In reality I shall never part from you.

" In case I do not see you personally any more—farewell.

" I think there is nobody of whom I have to beg pardon for personal wrongs.

" Just now the scene of Warsaw life—the noisy streets, the sun overhead—unfolds before me.

" Greet Warsaw in my name. Farewell.

" Your faithful I. K."

And here is a press-correspondent's account of the last words of a man who was killed in December, 1905, after the Moscow rebellion. The name of the writer is V. Vladimirov.

" In the course of my inquiries about the activities of the Semyonovski regiment along the Moscow-Kazan line," he writes, " I heard many stories about Engineer Ukhtomski, who showed heroic firmness in the last moments of his life. Part of this information was given by the captain of the Semyonovski regiment which executed him in Lubertzy, together with three other workingmen. The captain, who observed him in his last moments, was charmed by his personality; the soldiers felt a deep reverence for him, their esteem being expressed in the fact that after the first volley he remained untouched. Not one bullet had grazed him.

" His appearance was in no way striking. Of medium

height, with vivid, clever eyes, he gave the impression of a very modest, almost bashful, man.

"It was a mere accident that he fell into the hands of the punitive expedition. He was traveling in a carriage, when he stopped in the Lubertzy inn, ignorant of the presence of soldiers at the station. He was searched and a revolver was found in his pocket, which caused his arrest. He was brought before the officer in charge.

"Questioned as to his name, he refused to reveal it. The officer went over the lists and the photographs of the revolutionists, comparing them with the live original before him. Then he exclaimed:

"'You are Engineer Ukhtomski; you will be shot!'

"'I thought so,' Ukhtomski answered coolly.

"This happened in the afternoon, about three o'clock. He was asked whether he did not want to take the communion, and expressed his desire to do so.

"After the communion he was taken, together with three workingmen of the Lubertzy brake-factory, to the place of execution. He made the following statement, addressing the officer:

"'I knew that, once in your hands, I should be shot; I was prepared for death, and that is why I am so calm. Now that I am going to die, I may just as well tell you who it was that enabled the revolutionary train to escape safely from Moscow—that important train carrying the armed groups, the leaders and the heads of the Moscow rebellion, together with the members of the strike committee.

"'It was I who operated the engine of the train, at a time when all the tracks were already in the hands of the troops and you threatened us with machine-guns near the freight-station.

"'It was a dangerous place, altogether barren, open from every side. The train was a good target for bullets, but I increased the speed to seventy versts an hour. I was myself at the levers.

"'I increased the pressure of the steam in the boiler to fifteen atmospheres. The kettle was nearly bursting. We were in greater danger of the locomotive going to pieces than of being injured by your bullets.

"'When our train was thus madly rushing onward, your machine-guns began to rattle. They were not dangerous to us, who were on the point of being blown into the air every second, or of rolling down the precipice and being crushed.

"'The experienced hand of the engineer controlled the steam and kept the fate of the men you were after. You wounded six of them, but nobody was killed. They all escaped. Now they are safe. You cannot reach them.'

"At the place of execution they wanted to blindfold Ukhtomski. He asked the favor of meeting death squarely, face to face. He also refused to turn his back to the soldiers.

"His casual fellow-travelers on the road of death begged the officer to refrain from shooting him; they went down on their knees, they wept. The last moment was dreadful!

"Ukhtomski silently watched the preparations, then turned to the soldiers, saying:

"'You now face the duty of acting in accordance with your oath. Do it honestly, as I honestly did my duty in accordance with my oath. Our oaths differ; that is all. . . . Please, Captain, give your command.'

"The soldiers fired. The workingmen dropped. Ukhtomski was not hurt. He stood erect, arms folded on his breast.

"The soldiers fired again. He fell on the snow, but he was still alive and fully conscious. He looked around, with eyes full of anguish.

"The captain gave him the *coup de grâce*. He fired a revolver through his head and thus put an end to his torment." *

* V. Vladimirov, *Punitive Expedition*, pp. 79-82.

# CHAPTER XXXI

## PRISON AND EXILE

LIFE in prison was one of the phases of revolutionary activity. Events of prison and exile sometimes occupied the center of public attention and added greatly to the general unrest.

The revolutionist under arrest looked upon himself as a *political opponent* of the administration and demanded appropriate treatment. The administration, fully aware of the difference between a revolutionist and an ordinary criminal, was still inclined to treat the revolutionist as a malefactor. The revolutionist thought himself a *prisoner of war,* to whom every courtesy ought to be extended. The administration saw in him an enemy who must be punished.

This led to innumerable clashes and made prison cells the scene of revolutionary battles.

The number of causes was legion. The government's allowance for the prisoners was 7 copecks (3.5 cents) a day. The prices of bread being 2 to 3 copecks a pound, this allowance meant actual starvation. The prisoners were dependent upon their private means. The right to use private means, however, depended upon the administration. In some prisons the purchase of food was free to any political prisoner in possession of money; in others it was limited; in still others it was forbidden. Everything depended upon the arbitrary will of the warden and the governor of the province.

In some cases the prisoners were allowed to spend two hours daily in the open air; in some, as little as ten minutes. There were prisons where books were admitted freely; in others, nobody was allowed to have more than

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two books at a time. And there were prisons where reading was confined to theological books only.

The desire to improve their condition so as not to be broken by the hardship of prison impelled the imprisoned revolutionists to struggle against severe rules. The main cause of struggle, however, was the demand for *courtesy on the part of the prison-administration.*

The wardens, their assistants, the guards and the prison physician were wont to treat the prisoners rudely. Curses, swearing, a slap in the face and the contemptuous "thou" (instead of the courteous "you") were the common practice in dealing with criminals. This practice the administration was strongly tempted to extend also over the "Reds." The latter, however, were ready to face death rather than personal insult. Prison struggles, therefore, became an every-day occurrence.

The methods of struggle were various. A simultaneous outbreak of noise by all the prisoners was one way; a general destruction of the furniture and equipment of the cells was another; then there was the hunger-strike and physical resistance. At the time a fight was going on in prison, the revolutionary organizations outside the prison became uneasy; proclamations were issued; the offices of the governor and district attorney were stormed by representatives of society whose children were among the prisoners, and in the majority of cases the administration yielded.

One of the struggles the author of this book took part in was a hunger-strike in the prison of Vilna, which occurred in the early spring of 1904 and lasted six days. The political prison of this city was located in an old castle of the Lithuanian kings,* on the banks of the river Vilia, in the suburb of Antokol. The construction of the

* It was the practice of the Russian government to turn the historic buildings of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine into armories, arsenals, police stations or prisons. When I served in the army, I saw the castle of Dubno, a beautiful piece of sixteenth-century architecture, occupied by an army hospital and barbarously altered.

castle permitted no solitary cells, and the prisoners were located in halls, fifteen to twenty prisoners in each hall. The principle of solitary confinement being out of place, there was no sound reason why only those who happened to live in one cell should be allowed to communicate with each other. The administration, persuaded by the prisoners, made it a practice to keep the doors of the cells open from nine in the morning till seven in the evening. This was convenient for the prisoners, who could thus group themselves according to their party affiliations, nationalities and personal sympathies and spend their time in reading or conversation or plays. It was by no means annoying to the administration, either, the prisoners keeping order and strictly adhering to the rules. However, after an attempt to escape was made by some of the prisoners, the cells were locked up and the grip of the administration tightened.

The warden, Dunkel, had been recently promoted from the rank of district chief of police and was extraordinarily anxious to make a good record. He was a man of about forty, stout, ruddy, with an apoplectic neck and small, deeply-set, greenish-gray eyes in a large face. He was extremely proud of his new position and used to brag how high he stood in the opinion of the governor and how he played cards with the highest provincial officials. Dunkel was the typical administrator: quick-tempered, standing no contradiction, believing himself very efficient, very farsighted, while in reality he was mercilessly led about by the nose by his assistant. Dunkel had a habit of punishing his criminal prisoners with his own hands. More than once I saw him beating a criminal, slapping his face with all his force and hitting him under the ribs, while the guards respectfully waited in the distance. Observations warranted our belief that Dunkel experienced a physical pleasure in beating others. As to the revolutionists, he hated them for their independence and moral courage. After the cells

had been locked up, he became impertinent with the political prisoners, and his attitude was challenging.

We decided to accept the challenge. We worked out a list of demands, chief among them being the unlocking of the cells, open-air exercise two hours daily and polite treatment. In case of refusal, a hunger-strike was announced.

Dunkel appeared in the prison, red with excitement, panting and swearing. He went from cell to cell, reminding us we were prisoners, not patients in a first-class sanitarium, threatening to throw the ringleaders into the underground dungeon and, if necessary, to tie us hand and foot. We were silent. It had been decided beforehand that we should have no argument with the warden.

The following morning the hunger-strike began. We threw out of the windows and the grate doors all the edibles in our possession. The portions brought in the morning we refused to accept. The strike lasted six full days. All the prisoners, over a hundred in number, participated, and our endurance was crowned with success.

Dunkel yielded to all our demands. Life in prison was again tolerable.

Up to the beginning of 1906 most prisons represented little revolutionary communities where principles of equality and mutual aid were maintained. In the prison of Kiev, in 1903, we had "communal ownership" of food, clothes and books. Everything received by a prisoner from his relatives (excluding flowers and sweets) were given over to the "community" and shared alike by all prisoners. In this manner there were no "rich" or "poor" among the inmates. In the prison of Vilna, in 1904, we had our own community kitchen, which fed all the prisoners, irrespective of their contributions to the community. The revolutionary "Red Cross," an auxiliary organization comprising mainly intellectuals not active in the parties, provided the prisoners with money and books.

No fear of prison ever prevented a criminal from committing a crime, the criminologists say. This was true also in regard to the revolutionists. Arrests, imprisonments and exile were looked upon by the revolutionists as part of their activities, a continuation of their revolutionary struggles, and prison-walls had by no means a frightening effect. There were categories of party members who were almost glad to land in the quiet haven of the cell. Such were the professional revolutionists and the uneducated workingmen.

The professional revolutionist lived all the time under a severe strain. He bore the responsibility for the entire organization, national or local; he had under his supervision a number of circles, groups, brotherhoods, single individuals, with their various characters and problems; he had to think of " steps," manifestations, strikes, organizers, agitators, speakers, proclamations. And all the time he was haunted by the fear of spies, not through personal cowardice, but in the interests of the organization. All the time he had to hide, to disguise himself, to take precautionary measures. When at last he was seized —if only his organization remained half-way intact—it was a pleasure for him to relax, to get rid of all his worries, to have more time for careful, systematic reading. " To take a vacation," it was called in revolutionary circles. The trial never worried the revolutionist much, because he knew beforehand that after his term of one or two years in prison he would be sent to Siberia, whence he would flee at the first opportunity, to join the revolutionary movement. His prison time he used for meditation and for study of the problems, social and political, that interested him most.

As to the ordinary workingman who was not a professional revolutionist, for him prison had another attraction. The first acquaintance with revolutionary ideas usually invoked in the workingman an insatiable appetite for knowledge. Under prevailing circumstances, where

the conducting of evening-classes for adults was considered a political offense and the revolutionary reading-circles were under strict surveillance, the workingmen had almost no chance to get education. Besides, work in the factory in daytime and in the organization in the evening hardly left time for self-instruction. In prison the workingman had free board, free time and ardent teachers in the revolutionary intellectuals. Many prisons were turned into preparatory schools for agitators. In the Vilna prison, in 1904, we had two classes, each consisting of ten to fifteen workingmen: one for beginners, the other for more advanced pupils. The subjects were: Political Economy, Principles of Sociology, the History of Civilization, Parliamentary Systems in Theory and Practice and the History of the Revolutionary Movement in Russia, besides discussions on current political events and party tactics conducted in the presence of all the prisoners. The prison-community had regular connections with the local revolutionary organizations, and the new revolutionary publications as a rule reached the prisoners sooner than the public at large. The revolutionary writers had a chance to participate from prison in their party-organs.

This idyllic felicity, interrupted by storms of protests and violent convulsions, lasted till October-November, 1905, when most of the prisons were opened by the revolution. The overwhelming majority of the prisoners—except those charged with terrorism or similar actions—were freed. For a short while the prisons remained vacant. When they filled again their aspect was completely changed.

The upheaval of 1905-06 drove hosts of heterogeneous people into the revolution, and the arrests of the oncoming counter-revolution were also made among all classes. The prison inmates of 1906-08 were no longer the old-time revolutionists who had gone through the school of party-work and been hardened in revolutionary practice. Neither were they as well prepared to defend their human

dignity. One provincial prison in 1907 contained a few score of peasants who had taken part in the looting of a prince's estate; a number of workingmen just taken from the street, many of them without party affiliation; five or six post-office clerks, several bookkeepers, book-shop clerks, newsboys, three editors, several writers, one lawyer very well known in the community, two physicians, a priest, several soldiers, one pharmacist, a number of women of all professions and all walks of life, and even one general. All these people had no moral bond, were under control of no organization, were unable to speak a common language or to come to an understanding as regards concerted action. They were actually at the mercy of the prison administration.

On the other hand, the old-time respect for the prisoners on the part of the administration had disappeared. These "Reds" were no longer dreamers, queer chaps, talking impossible things and cherishing crazy theories. They had become a menace! They had been on the brink of overthrowing the existing order! They were dangerous enemies. They had to be treated accordingly. The administration abruptly changed front. No more lenience; no more liberties. The rules became rigid, the discipline merciless. Prisoners had to jump up from their seats at the approach of a superior; to keep "eyes front," to answer in a military fashion, "We wish health to your Excellency!" No "communities," no readings, no kitchens, no "Red Cross" aid were tolerated any more.

The number of prisoners increased, their situation became worse. Corporal punishment, the dungeon, chains, a diet of bread and water became permanent features of prison life. At times the prisoners revolted; then military force was summoned, prisoners were fired upon and many subsequently tried by court-martial. The death chambers were nearly always occupied, and the prisoners witnessed the construction of scaffolds in the prison-yards and the

hanging of their comrades before dawn. In many prisons mediæval tortures became part of the practice. Russian autocracy was taking revenge for the moment of its weakness.

In 1910-11 the Russian prisons were a physical and moral Inferno.

Siberia was a prison of vast dimensions. Revolutionists were sent there, either to work in the houses of correction or to be under police control for several years (usually not more than five) or for life. The inmates of the houses of correction wore chains and were treated exactly like the criminals. After the expiration of their term they were not allowed to return to Russia, but had to stay in Siberia under police control. Those who were under police control were not allowed to leave their town or village and had to report at the police station every day. The exiles were entirely at the mercy of the local administration, which, in Siberia, is more backward than in European Russia.

As a rule the exiles were not kept in towns near the railroad, lest they should escape and return to Russia. The towns of exile were often chosen hundreds of miles from a civilized center. The most serious revolutionists were sent to Yakutsk, in the far Northeast, about 1,100 miles from the last railroad station, Irkutsk. Communication with Yakutsk is possible only through the Lena River during certain months of the year. Still other revolutionists were sent to places located several hundred miles from Yakutsk. The mail reaches those places three or four times a year.

Life in the little Siberian villages or towns with a few hundred, sometimes a few score, native inhabitants, was dreary and full of privation. The arbitrariness of the administration was sometimes intolerable. Exiles were not allowed to go out hunting in the woods or to visit friends in neighboring towns. Oftentimes they were not allowed to give instruction to the children of the natives

or to get employment in public offices. The demeanor of the police was harsh and challenging.

To reach the place of destination it took the prisoners months. From the Central Prison in Moscow they traveled in railroad-cars, under the escort of soldiers, to Irkutsk. On their way they stopped for weeks in various prisons. From Irkutsk they had to go on foot hundreds of miles to their place of exile, stopping over night in local prison stations. All the time they were under the guard of soldiers and subject to very harsh treatment. Yet their only thought and their only hope was to escape. Many accomplished this on the road before reaching their place of destination. Others fled from the place after having made the necessary preparations.

To flee from a village, a friend of mine had to ride on horseback six hundred miles through the primordial forests of Siberia before he reached Irkutsk. He spent ten days in the forest. His guide and companion was a criminal who had fled from the house of correction. Both were armed with rifles and neither trusted the other. The criminal was anxious to get hold of my friend's belongings and his (forged) passport. It was a dangerous, nerve-racking game those two played all the time. My friend never slept, spending nights in a sitting position and always, even in a half doze, watching his companion. A strong man, with great muscular and nervous power, he was in a state of delirium toward the end of the journey. He had hallucinations. He talked to himself. When riding a few yards ahead of his guide he abruptly turned his head, he would see him pointing his rifle at his neck. This was repeated several times. The two lived by hunting, and by the time they reached Irkutsk they were nearly starved. In Irkutsk my friend disguised himself as a rich Siberian merchant, and after a series of adventures reached Smolensk, where he again entered the revolutionary organization. A few months later we were neighbors in prison.

By I. Levitan.

THE GREAT ROAD TO SIBERIA

Those who remained in Siberia for a longer term devoted their time to studies, and many a revolutionist returned from exile a well-read man.

After the storms of 1905-06 the situation of the exile changed for the worse. Cases of suicide among the exiles, some as a protest against intolerable treatment, shocked the entire country.

# PART V

## MARCH, 1917

# CHAPTER XXXII

## "VAE VICTIS"

"NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts people made to disfigure the portion of land on which they were crowded; notwithstanding the stones they were hammering into it to prohibit vegetation; notwithstanding the cleaning away of every grass-blade that sprang up, the cutting of trees and the banishing of birds and beasts; notwithstanding the spreading of coal and naphtha smoke—still, spring was spring, even in town. . . . The grass, reviving, burst forth and grew green wherever it had not been scraped away."

This description by Tolstoi can be fairly applied to conditions in Russia after 1907. Autocracy was making every effort to tame the spirit of freedom, to exterminate all manifestations of social or political activity on the part of the people, to thrust the masses into lethargy. Yet times had changed, and notwithstanding its strenuous efforts, the Russian government could not stop the growth and development of social forces.

This, however, became evident only a few years *after* the great upheaval. In the days of despair that followed the collapse of the revolution, it seemed that the social forces of Russia had been weakened for many years to come, and that the country was entering a long, dreary period of political and social stagnation.

The material gains of the revolution for the various classes amounted to naught.

*The peasants* had received no land. The law of November 9, 1906, making it possible for the individual peasant to receive his share of land in private property and thus to become free from the inconveniences of the

village community, had not increased the land-fund of the peasantry as a class. The government hastened to put the law of November 9th into practice. With unprecedented rapidity it established land-regulation boards all over the country, urging the peasants to take advantage of the new "freedom" and giving aid to those breaking away from the community. Great numbers of peasants seized the opportunity. Within a few years a remarkable change in the forms of peasant land-ownership took place —a change amounting almost to a revolution. Yet the removal of legal obstacles alone was not sufficient to make the peasants more prosperous. The newly created individual farmer had to fence his farm-land; he had to build a house on the spot (living in the old house in the village street made it difficult for him to guard his crops and generally to manage his estate); he had to introduce new methods of cultivation, new rotations of crops, new ways of cattle breeding; he had, in short, to become a new man on his new piece of land. This was not impossible, but it required money, special knowledge and time. And though the "individualists" were usually the better situated peasants, they were hardly able to improve their husbandry in a short time. The transition to private land-ownership was a step forward to a better economic future, no doubt, but the fruits of this transition could be reaped only after long years of able and patient work under the wise guidance of an efficient government.

The law of November 9th was intended to accelerate the process of differentiation in the village. It had to create a class of well-to-do individualistic farmers, conservative adherents of law and order, to counterbalance the economic radicalism manifested by the members of the village community. The immediate result was only one-sided. While the felicity of the prospective "aristocracy" still remained a question of the future, the increasing number of paupers became a menace for the present. The poorer peasants could make only one use

THE VALE OF MOURNING
After the Revolution of 1905

of their "freedom" from the community—they could sell their land. This they did, the purchasers usually being not their fellow-peasants, but the village sharks, the exploiters of the community. Thus the differentiation resulted in *hopes* of prosperity for one pole of the village and in *real* destitution for the other.

As to the bulk of the peasantry, they neither quit the community, nor did they sell their land. Now, as before, they had to live on their agricultural work and to derive their income from their barren, exhausted "strips." Their situation was by no means better than before the revolution. *Famine* became almost a constant feature of Russian rural life. Millions starved even in years of good crops. Twenty millions of peasants had not enough bread to feed themselves and their families in 1911-12, and eight millions were receiving hunger rations from the administration (thirty pounds of flour per capita monthly). The number of famine-stricken provinces in 1911-12 was twenty, and the appropriations for the feeding of the starving peasants amounted to over 120 millions of rubles.

The peasants had no reason to be happier now than before 1905.

*The industrial workingmen* had obtained no right to organize for the defense of their economic interests. The revolution had left them a meager right to form labor unions, but, legally, the unions had to confine themselves to mutual aid or to educational work only, the conducting of strikes and collective bargaining with employers being strictly forbidden. In most cases the practice of the administration made even this limited right illusory. Practically, no labor organization for whatever purpose was tolerated. Over and over again the workingmen of the various trades in Petersburg and elsewhere tried to form organizations and to bring order into the chaos of the labor-movement, and everywhere, sooner or later, under one pretext or another, their efforts were frustrated

by the administration. At the same time the economic position of the workingmen became worse. The gains in shorter work-days and higher wages obtained in the course of the revolution were slipping out of their hands; organized capital was facing them as one solid front, while their own forces were scattered and shattered and the cost of living was rapidly growing.* In 1912 a law providing for sick-funds and accident-compensation for industrial workingmen was enacted, the funds to be formed partly by deductions from the employees' wages, partly by contributions of the employers. The law in itself might have been of great value for the workingmen, but the practice of the administration allowing no meetings and no speeches in connection with the sick-funds, suppressing publications and often arresting the labor-representatives elected by their comrades to conduct the affairs of the funds, made the new law a source of annoyance and bitterness for the laboring masses. The workingmen certainly had no reason to be satisfied after the collapse of the revolution.

*The industrial world* was allowed to organize, to expand and even to exert influence over the government, but these privileges it had enjoyed also prior to 1905-06. The revolution had not changed its political status. True, representatives of industry and commerce now occupied a number of seats in the Imperial Duma and Imperial Council, some of them being leaders of political parties. Yet now, as before the revolution, industry and commerce had no political power. The right to determine economic, financial, military and foreign policies remained entirely in the hands of the bureaucratic rulers, whose actions were not always guided by solicitude for an unhampered development of economic forces. Now, as before the revolution, the big associations of factory-owners, mine-oper-

* According to official data, the average wages of a workingman in 1910 were 244 rubles, an increase of two rubles compared with 1900-1901 (see page 12).

ators, railroad-men, bankers, could see their wants satisfied only in a "super-legal" way, through private negotiations with bureaucrats "higher up." This was hardly flattering to the class-consciousness and self-respect of a modern man of affairs.

*The intellectuals* had gained nothing through the revolution. Their political situation had become even worse than before. The administration suspected an enemy in every educated man, and the most hideous attacks of the Black Hundred were aimed at the intellectuals. The search for "suspects," the hunting for hidden "destroyers," made the life of thousands of intellectuals a nightmare.

The social forces remained the same as before the revolution; the needs and desires that had moved them to shake the chains of autocracy remained unsatisfied. Yet the outlook was gloomy.

Autocracy was victorious. In the preceding battles it had lost the mask of a superior power elevated *above* parties and equal to all its "subjects." After the revolution, autocracy did not even deny that it was a warring faction, struggling for its existence. It did not even try to appear just. "Might is right" was now its slogan, and this it strove to impress on all Russian classes, parties, nationalities, professions—with the sole exception of the nobility and the Black Hundred.

Vae victis.

The Duma had survived, but it had not a vestige of power. The majority of the Duma—the extreme conservatives, the "nationalists" and the Octobrists—claiming to be co-operating with the government in the reconstruction of Russia, could appear to be so only while complying with the wishes and whims of the administration. The bureaucracy readily accepted their co-operation, under the one condition that they put the stamp of the Duma on every measure planned by the administration. They had a legal right to reject a bill, and the October manifesto had explictly declared that "no law can be-

come binding without the consent of the Imperial Duma," but the administration had long forgotten that October scrap of paper. The administration had ways and means of putting its decisions into practice without the consent of the Duma. The body of the bureaucracy was well organized; the periphery carried out promptly the orders of the center, in which there was no place for the Duma. The Duma was an outsider, a body of talkers. It might be tolerated, but it was not to be allowed to interfere with governmental affairs. The Duma could reject the budget, yet even this would not have placed the administration in a difficult situation. Large portions of the budget were, under all circumstances, exempted from the jurisdiction of the Duma (the so-called " armored budget " covering the major part of the state expenditures) ; as to the other portions, the government could easily overcome the obstacle. As a last resort, it could adjourn the Duma for a few months, in the meantime drawing freely from the state treasury. Should the Duma be stubborn in rejecting a bill which was desirable to the administration, there was Article 87 of the Fundamental Laws. This article provided that in case of a pressing need, when the legislative bodies were in recess and the time was short, the government was allowed to issue an emergency law which had later to receive the consent of the Duma and the Council. Repeatedly the government used this Article 87 as a means to overcome the obstruction of the Duma. In this way the law of November 9, 1906, was issued, the most radical land-reform since 1861. And when, in the spring of 1911, the Duma showed reluctance to pass a bill introducing national discrimination in the Zemstvo institutions to be established in six Western provinces, the government adjourned the Duma for a period of three days, during which the Zemstvo bill was published on the basis of Article 87. In no time the institutions provided by the bill were created and the offices set to work, so that when the " emergency " bill later came up before the Duma the

Zemstvo in the six provinces was already an accomplished fact, and the Duma was compelled to accept it. In similar fashion the government issued a number of other laws which were far from being dictated by emergencies, but were unacceptable to the Duma.

The government was free. The Duma was a representation of a defeated people. The Duma had to be grateful for being allowed to live. The Black Hundred made it its policy to "demand" the dissolution of the Duma. In times of crises, rumors were abroad that the Duma was to be abolished or to be turned into a consulting body. The rumors were disquieting, because they seemed plausible. Nothing was impossible in the "land of unlimited possibilities."

Vae victis.

The courts offered no more guarantees of justice. Prior to the revolution there had been a distinction between a court of justice and a tribunal of gendarmes. A court of justice based its decisions on evidence, on reliable witnesses, allowing the defendant to have his counsel. A tribunal of gendarmes inflicted punishments without evidence of guilt, trusting the stories of political spies and allowing no defense on the part of the convict. After the revolution this distinction disappeared. Judges sentenced people to heavy punishments, to exile, to life-imprisonment without evidence, solely trusting the judgment of the gendarmes. Judges framed decisions not in accordance with the offense, but in obedience to orders received from the office of the governor, or the chief of gendarmes, or the leader of the Black Hundred. Judges disobeying orders were quickly removed. The bar-associations, consisting of liberal lawyers who were fighting against lawlessness in the courts, were raided, searched, suspended and their leaders often put into prison. At the bar the lawyers were treated not as respectable citizens co-operating with the judges in establishing the truth, but as scoundrels, uplifters and plotters whose place

was in the prisoner's dock. Justice was an enemy of triumphant autocracy. Justice could only help the defeated people. Therefore justice was suspended.

Vae victis.

The free press was especially obnoxious to the victors. Immediately after the coup d'état of June 3, 1907, the government ordered: "The publication or spreading of articles or other communications invoking a hostile attitude towards the government is forbidden," and "The spreading of alarming news concerning the actions of the government or a public calamity or other similar events is forbidden." Offenders were to be prosecuted by court. Should the court, however, find no criminal action in an "undesirable" press-publication, the administration was allowed to impose on the publisher a fine of 500 rubles in localities under Intensified Vigilance and of 3,000 rubles in localities under Extraordinary Vigilance, which meant practically in every province of Russia. The press had thus to suffer from the whips of a biased court and the scorpions of an infuriated administration. Yet this was not enough. *Confiscation of newspapers* became a widespread practice. The press-buildings were raided early in the morning, and the fresh sheets of newspapers containing articles undesirable to the administration were seized before reaching the readers.

The press groaned under all this "vigilance." In 1911 the fines imposed on publishers amounted to 73,450 rubles; in 1912 the sum grew to 96,800; in 1913 it was already 129,775 rubles. The confiscations made some of the press-publications appear almost apocryphal. In 1913 the daily, *Life,* was suspended 11 times in the course of 19 days; out of 17 issues of the *Workman's Truth* 15 were confiscated; the *Northern Truth* had 19 confiscations and 2 fines in the course of 25 days. Owing to arrests, some newspapers were compelled to change their (nominal) editors nearly every month. There were newspapers which had six or seven or even more editors in prison.

These prosecutions were sometimes due to no offense at all. The censor, the chief of police, the district attorney, were at liberty to curb the press without any special reason. The press at large was an enemy. The press had to suffer.

Vae victis.

In 1905 and 1906 hundreds of books, thousands of leaflets had been issued. At that time the press was almost free. The administration did not interfere. After 1907, with the growth of its self-assurance, the government began to put on trial the authors of those books and leaflets. Hundreds of authors whose works of the stormy years had long been out of the market, and almost forgotten, were tried and sentenced to one to three years' imprisonment. No consideration was given to name, to fame, to age. Nicholas Morozov, the old revolutionist, who had spent in the fortress of Schluesselburg, in solitary confinement, twenty-four years (from 1881 till 1905) and after his release had become famous as a scientist and a poet, was again put into prison for a year's term for his book of philosophical poems, *Star Songs*. Society was indignant. Intellectual Russia was shocked. But revenge is revenge. Nicholas Morozov stood too high in public opinion. He manifested a youthful energy in literary and social work. He had to share the fate of all enemies.

Vae victis.

The right of assemblage and the right to organize were not abandoned, but societies and meetings were put under the supervision of the local administration, which amounted to almost complete suppression. Here is an example of administrative activity in regard to organizations. In 1913 the Petersburg authorities refused charters to the "Hygiene" Society, the "Science and Life" Circle, the gathering of industry and commerce employees, the gathering of artists and writers, the "Ars" Literary Society, the union of typographical workers, the union of

steam-heat workers, etc. The authorities dissolved the society of professional photographers, the educational society of the Nevski borough, the "Lux" Society, the "Esperanto" Society, the Society of Jurists, the Religious Society, "The Good Shepherd," the "House of Mercy" Society, the Women's Mutual Aid Association. Numerous meetings and lectures on current events, on the activities of the Imperial Duma, on labor sick-funds, on art, literature, science, education, were suppressed. In Kiev a lecture of the Duma representatives, Professor Ivanov and M. Shingarev, on the political parties in the Duma, a lecture in the theological society on the structure of the Russian Church, a literary recital in memory of the poet Shevtchenko, a "flower-day" for the benefit of the Free Firemen's Association, were not permitted. Most of the suppressed societies pursued no political ends whatever. Most of the lectures were of a purely educational character. But education was as much an enemy of autocracy as open political opposition. Education had to be suppressed.

The rule of Extraordinary Vigilance spread all over Russia. Under this rule the local authorities were allowed to substitute for the existing laws their own arbitrary regulations, touching not only public affairs, but practically every realm of human activities. Under the rule of Extraordinary Vigilance, houses were searched, people were arrested without warrant and exiled without trial. Under the same rule it could happen that the chief of police of Yalta ordered every inhabitant to greet him when meeting him in the streets, and the governor of Nishni Novgorod forbade a singer to sing Chopin's *Spring* at a concert, because it was a translation from the Polish and therefore obnoxious to the patriotic soul of a Russian. Under the rule of Vigilance the governor of Kiev ordered the co-operative organizations of his province to subscribe to no newspapers whatever, and the governors of many other provinces exiled to Siberia their

By N. Pirogov.

FAMINE IS COMING!

personal enemies who had nothing to do with politics. Under the rule of Vigilance the assistant governor of Charkov closed the Charkov Medical Society, with its net of hospitals, bacteriological institute, laboratories, vaccination points, constructed with great care in the course of half a century. Under the rule of Vigilance every governor and governor-general became independent in local affairs; Russia was split into a number of kingdoms, each ruled by its own autocrat; the extreme centralization of Russia became the opposite. The central government was often disgusted by the notoriety of local rulers; but it was helpless, the local rulers being backed by members of the "Star Chamber," which was more powerful than all the ministers combined.

Russia was disintegrated, yet united by the general trend of administrative zeal. The cue was given from Petersburg. Those were the years when Tzar Nicholas II identified himself with the Black Hundred, wearing the insignia of this organization and pardoning participants in pogroms who had been found guilty by the courts.

A negative policy alone was not sufficient. One had to invent a program of positive work. One had to be able to parade in the cloak of saviors of the people. One needed an axle for the huge administrative wheel of destruction. This was readily found in the storeroom of the Russian autocracy. It was *militant nationalism.*

Russia includes a great number of non-Russian nationalities: Poles, Jews, Finns, Letts, Lithuanians, Tartars, Caucasians. Those nationalities, suffering more than the native Russians under the yoke of autocracy, had manifested a comparatively deeper revolutionary excitement and had fought the most determined revolutionary battles. Now the victorious autocracy made them the object of its special attention. The "strangers" were declared enemies of the Russian people. Their intention, it was asserted, had been the dismemberment of great

Russia and the enthralling of the Russian masses. The people, therefore, must fight against those destroyers, it was urged. The government ought to help to save Russia from her internal menace.

A war of extermination was declared against all small nationalities, especially against the Jews, who had been most conspicuous in the revolution. Polish schools were prosecuted. The Polish language was placed under ban. Finland was robbed of the major part of its autonomy, the law of June 17, 1910, exempting from the jurisdiction of the Finnish Parliament all affairs which related to the empire at large; the Russian Imperial Duma and the Russian government were made the supreme legislators of Finland in the most vital problems. As to the Jews, there was hardly any measure that had not been tried before to hurt their dignity and make their life intolerable. The government could only vary its old measures, making them more ingenious, more subtle, more humiliating. This it did with great inventiveness and zest. Still, it lacked a great issue, a central point, a striking slogan. This was found in the *blood accusation.*

The government semi-officially accepted the theory that the Jews were using Christian blood for religious purposes. Ages-old legends were revived. Sinister writers were quoted. The black press threw poisonous rumors into the heart of the masses. Soon the dark rumors assumed shape. The Mendel Bailis case was staged with great circumstance.

Mendel Bailis was a poor Jewish factory employee in a suburb of Kiev. Not far from the brick-yard where he lived the body of a murdered Christian boy was discovered. No connection whatever could be established between the murder and Mendel Bailis. Yet the local authorities, in perfect accord with the wishes of the central government, declared Bailis to be the murderer of the boy and the crime to have been committed with a religious purpose—that of using the blood in the Jewish

Passover bread. Bailis was imprisoned. A prosecution was started.

For two years the Bailis case was in the center of public attention. The government attached tremendous importance to this particular case, which was, after all, only one instance among a million manifestations of administrative contempt for law. The government, as it were, made the case a test-trial between itself and the opposing forces. It seemed as if in this case all the nationalistic policies of the post-revolutionary period found their culmination.

For two years the "loyal" press fed on the blood-accusation. The most hateful rumors were spread. Mediæval conceptions were revived. It looked as if Russia had no greater problems and no deeper interests than the Kiev blood-case.

When, at last, after long delays, the case came up for trial (in the fall of 1913), all Russia was astir. The circulation of newspapers reached unheard-of dimensions. The proceedings of the court, lasting fully thirty-five days, were minutely followed with the most absorbing interest. The government lost the case. Notwithstanding the pressure on the jury, notwithstanding the elaborate testimony of professors in the employ of the government, notwithstanding the participation in the trial of the most notorious leaders of the Black Hundred, Bailis was declared not guilty.

This was a blow to the government, but the nationalistic course continued in the same reckless manner. Soon new blood-trials came up, and the pogrom propaganda was openly conducted by the black press and the black organizations.

The position of the Black Hundred during those years was peculiar. It was, perhaps, the most obvious manifestation of governmental decay. An ordinary petty merchant, or a member of the lower clergy, or an obscure personage without any occupation, gathering around himself a dozen or so unscrupulous individuals of the slums,

could actually terrorize an entire city. The dozen individuals would call themselves the local committee of the Union of Russian People (alias Black Hundred); the organizer would be named the "leader" of the organization, and soon the activities of the group would begin, to the despair of an entire community. The Black Hundred organized patriotic processions, and the authorities were obliged to give them aid and participate in the manifestations. The Black Hundred announced patriotic services, and the clergy, knowing very well the caliber of the organization and the moral complexion of its members, were afraid to refuse. What is more, the authorities, high and low, including the priests, were obliged to enlist in the Black Hundred, though many were loath to do so. In case of opposition, or even silent discontent, on the part of an administrator, telegrams were sent to Petersburg to the heads of the organization, to the "patriotic" press, to the Tzar.* As a rule, the desires of the Black Hundred were given full satisfaction, and the local obstructionists had either to yield or to leave. It goes without saying that all the lawless acts of the Black Hundred and those affiliated with it remained unpunished. Single individuals without talent or position made governors, professors, lawyers, district attorneys, bishops tremble. A score of degraded "Blacks" armed with rifles spread panic over large cities. Nobody could offer resistance.

It was a time when stupid and brutal oppression was a kind of advertisement for an administrator. The more senseless, the more glaring, the more notorious a measure was, the more indignation it aroused in progressive circles, the more conspicuous were its lawlessness and injurious effects, the more hostile comment it invoked, the more successful was the author of the measure.

* The author of this work happened to read a peculiar literary production of the Black Hundred. It was a pamphlet issued by the Baku committee of the Union of the Russian People, imputing to the local chief of police, the mayor and one of the richest oil kings the organization of a "revolutionary commune."

A Meeting of the Black Hundred
As seen by a cartoonist

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE REVIVAL

And yet "spring was spring."

In the summer of 1909 I was walking with several of my friends through the beautiful pine-woods near Kiev. One of the young men started to hum a revolutionary song.

"Stop it," another disgustedly remarked.

"Why?" I asked.

"Don't you see? It is bad taste."

It was true. In the summer of 1909 it was bad taste to sing revolutionary songs in Russia. In the summer of 1914, however, revolutionary songs echoed over the great plains of Russia, and nobody considered it bad taste. Old values had gained a new attractiveness. Old slogans had revived.

But it was a painful and harrowing process.

It started with bitter disappointment. The revolutionary movement was dead. The celebrated workingman proved to be powerless. The peasants were beaten into unconsciousness. The air was full of a bloody mist. What could be done?

The intellectual soul, the most restless factor in the revolution, was feverishly groping for a way out. The political road was blocked. Social ideas had become disgusting. The gods of yesterday were crushed, turned to dust. Who was going to be the new God?

Part of the Russian intellectuals had become interested in religious ideas. Revolutionists and materialists of a year or two before were now ardent readers of theological literature, ardent "seekers of God" as they were readily named. Another portion tried to find themselves

through an exaggerated estimation of sex-emotions, seeing in Artzybashev's *Sanin* a new slogan and a new light. (It is only just to state that this faction was very small and of no influence over the majority of thinking Russia.) Still others resorted to the sad Russian consolation,—self-reproach.

A remarkable literary monument has remained from those days: the collection of articles entitled *Guide-posts*. The book was written by a number of well-known philosophers, publicists and writers, who had been very sympathetic with the revolution though not affiliated with any revolutionary organization. Now they stepped forth with a long series of accusations against the revolutionary intellectuals, i.e., against all intellectual Russia. The intellectuals had attached too much importance to political and social problems and had neglected their inner life, the *Guide-posts* asserted. The intellectuals had ignored the great problems of philosophy, of mysticism, of religion, thus losing sight of the greatest values, and their struggle for freedom had been of no significance. The intellectuals were too realistic and too materialistic. "The intellectuals valued *freedom* and adhered to a philosophy that had no room for freedom; they valued *personality* and adhered to a philosophy that had no room for personality; they valued the *meaning of progress* and they adhered to a philosophy that had no room for a meaning of progress; they valued *human coherence* and they cherished a philosophy that had no room for the coherence of humanity." * The intellectuals lacked a deeper morality. The intellectuals had no sense of real justice. The intellectuals had too much respect for rules and regulations and too little inner freedom. The intellectuals had no knowledge, no real understanding of political situations, no real love for the people. The Intellectuals *worshiped* the people but at the same time

* Nicholas Berdyayev, "The Philosophical Truth," in the *Guide-posts*, pp. 20-21.

deemed themselves spiritual aristocrats elevated above the people. The intellectuals were " a host of sick people, isolated in their native country." *

The *Guide-posts* were a manifestation of *reaction* against the recent nervous strain. The book called the intellectual " back to himself," to his inner self, away from scourging reality. The tremendous success of the book, the volume of comment it aroused, proved that it struck a vital chord. For a long time the *Guide-posts* were the most absorbing topic of conversation. It looked as if intellectual Russia was really shaking from its feet the dust of the revolution.

But how about *political* life? How about *social* problems? How could the nameless sufferings of the people be removed through a return of the individual into himself? This the *Guide-posts* could not answer, being, as they were, an expression of sheer despair.

In the ranks of those intellectuals who had remained faithful to the revolutionary ideals, there was much confusion, much talk, and almost no constructive work. The revolutionary party organizations split into many small factions engaged in the most bitter controversies. The Social-Revolutionary Party received a severe blow through the revelations of the rôle of agents provocateurs in its highest offices; for a time it lost its prestige and struggled hard to retain a foot-hold. In the Social-Democratic Party, the controversy between the Bolsheviki and Mensheviki, dating from the second convention of the party in 1903, became more acute, splitting the party into two hostile factions, each of which was further divided into various minor groups, representing different shades of opinion.

The original controversy between the Mensheviki and Bolsheviki centered in the question of more or less centralization in the secret revolutionary organization. The divergence of views was in reality very slight, and only

* *Ibid.*, p. 87 (" Creative Self-consciousness," by M. O. Hershenzon).

the abnormal conditions of an "underground" organization made it appear of any significance. In the course of the revolution, however, and especially after the collapse of the 1905-06 mass-movement, the difference of opinion developed into two opposed conceptions of mass-movement, two methods of political activity. The Mensheviki were more realistic, the Bolsheviki more dogmatic. The Mensheviki tried to adapt their tactics—and urged the masses to adapt their movements—to the political juncture of the moment. The Bolsheviki believed in the possibility and feasibility of a permanent revolution quite independent of the political situation in Russia. The Mensheviki appealed to political wisdom, to cautious deliberation, to a broad view. The Bolsheviki had one goal in mind: an armed insurrection. The Mensheviki were convinced that a revolution in Russia was possible only as a result of combined efforts *of all classes,* groups and professions—industry and commerce not excluded. The Bolsheviki imagined the revolution as an uprising of the workingmen and peasants against the autocracy and capitalistic parties, ultimately resulting in a "dictatorship of the workingmen and peasants," which alone would secure real democracy and freedom. The Mensheviki had more faith in movements of large masses, even if the movements in themselves were of no outspoken radical character. The Bolsheviki believed only in one kind of movement—that of an extreme revolutionary character, armed insurrection or preparation for it. The Mensheviki emphasized the necessity of education, of patient and prolonged organizing activity

*"Menshevik" (plural: Mensheviki)—member of the minority; "Bolshevik" (plural: Bolsheviki)—member of the majority. At the second convention of the party in 1903 one of the factions formed a slight majority, the other—a minority. Hence the names of both factions. In the course of time the former convention-majority (the Bolsheviki) became a minority of the Russian Social-Democrats, yet the name remained. The words "Bolsheviki" and "Mensheviki" have now lost their connotation of majority or minority. The words are simply names of two factions.

among the " raw " masses. The Bolsheviki cherished the idea of conspiracy, of instigating and enticing the masses by the brave example of small, well-organized groups of armed revolutionists. The Mensheviki laid much stress on the movement itself and little on the initiative or the plans of a secret organization. The Bolsheviki were inclined to believe that the masses as such had no political wisdom and no clear understanding of their own interest and that they were apt to go astray without the leadership of wise conspirators.

This difference of conceptions led to severe clashes in practical affairs. In the first and second Duma, the Mensheviki thought political agreements with the Constitutional Democrats advisable, trusting the latter to be real opponents of the autocratic régime. The Bolsheviki looked upon a combination of Social-Democrats and Constitutional Democrats to uphold the same slogans as a betrayal of the interests of the working-class. George Plechanov, the famous theorist of the Russian Social-Democracy, thus formulated the standpoint of the Mensheviki: " We have two enemies (the autocratic régime and the capitalist parties). A wise strategy demands that we first concentrate our efforts on one of them. After having defeated the first enemy, we shall fall upon the other. This was the way of the great master in tactical problems, Napoleon I. Now, what ought to be the first object of our attack? Of course, the government. Let us, therefore, concentrate our forces on this enemy. The government meets, and will for a long time to come continue to meet with opposition on the part of the Constitutional Democrats. This means that your enemies are hostile to each other as yet. It is, therefore, only wise tactics that in concentrating your forces against the government, you use the Constitutional Democratic opposition for the benefit of the revolution." * The Bolsheviki, however, believed that the Constitutional Demo-

* G. V. Plechanov, *We and They*, p. ix.

crats were ready at any time to betray the interests of democracy by entering into an agreement with the absolute government as the price of trivial concessions.

During the months of comparative freedom in 1905 and 1906, the Mensheviki undertook propaganda in favor of a great labor-convention—not a convention of party-members, not even a convention of revolutionists, but a convention of representatives of the labor-masses, elected at broad gatherings of factory-workers. A convention of this kind, they emphasized, would be of tremendous organizing value, bringing order into the confusion of the labor-movement and exercising much more authority over the workingmen than any revolutionary committee. The Mensheviki anticipated that a labor-convention might refuse some of the Social-Democratic demands, yet in their opinion a great concrete movement of a progressive character was infinitely more valuable than the integrity of their party program. They believed in mass-movements. An organization of workingmen, even erring for a while and losing sight of the Social-Democratic conceptions, would ultimately find the right way, they believed. The Mensheviki valued above all the purity of principles. The control of their organization over the mass-movement, the strict adherence to Social-Democratic slogans was for them of supreme importance. They had no confidence in the political sense of a broad labor gathering, and they bitterly opposed the idea of handing over the fate of the labor-movement to haphazard representatives of the masses.

After the collapse of the revolution, the Mensheviki believed that an armed insurrection was impossible for the time being. They refused to call the masses to new battles which they were doomed to lose. The Bolsheviki thought this was detrimental to the cause of the revolution. In their opinion there was no reason for changing the old slogans and the old tactics.

In the dark years of distress, the Mensheviki were

loath to return to "underground" work. "Conspiracy" and secrecy was good for small circles, like the first Social-Democratic groups before the revolution, they thought. A broad labor-movement, however, oppressed by the government, could gain little through "underground" methods which necessarily must be confined to very small groups, they asserted. The Mensheviki, therefore, seized every opportunity to organize the masses on a "legal" basis. Mutual aid associations, co-operative societies, sporting circles, educational groups were all beneficial for the labor-movement and ultimately for the revolution, they believed. In their work they had to adapt themselves to political conditions; they had to curtail their demands, to muffle their slogans, even to hide their political physiognomy, yet they trusted the good judgment of the workingmen, believing that at the proper time the right slogans would find ample adherence. The Bolsheviki scoffed at such methods, considering that they represented an abandonment of revolutionary hopes and a misleading of the masses.

The masses, however, knew nothing of either the Mensheviki or the Bolsheviki. The masses were living their own lives, slowly digesting the lessons of 1905-06, making their own estimate of recent events, and gradually recovering from the shock. The great masses of the working population retained much more revolutionary energy and more hope for the future than the disappointed and down-hearted intellectuals were disposed to believe.

Slowly, but steadily, life was changing its aspect.

People were learning to read. People were becoming interested in current political events. From 1908 to 1909, according to official data, the number of persons subscribing to the public press grew 25 per cent. Books were now finding their way among the masses much more generally than before the revolution. The pressure of the censorship was severe, yet, notwithstanding all diffi-

culties, the press *was* speaking a free language, and the readers were gradually receiving political education.

Unions and organizations were under ban, yet slowly the country was organizing, and people were learning to partake in collective affairs. Co-operative organizations were rapidly spreading, both among the city population and among the peasants. In 1905 the number of co-operative organizations in Russia was 4,479, in 1911 their number increased to 19,253, in 1912 there were already 25,513 and in 1913 over 30,000 organizations. Each organization, whatever its aims might have been, was a little center for education and self-discipline. Labor unions were being organized, and the most strenuous efforts were being made to overcome the obstruction of the administration. The efforts repeatedly failed, yet they were beneficial for the working population in developing solidarity and a feeling of self-reliance. Meetings and lectures were considered perilous by the government, yet greater than the stubbornness of the administration was the striving of the masses to meet, to discuss their affairs, to listen to "a word of truth."

Russia was being driven by the government into the apathy and silence of the pre-revolutionary times. Yet Russia *had* become a constitutional country, legally if not in practice, and nobody could stem the rising of a new spirit. The tone of life had changed. The attitude towards the authorities had changed. The government had descended from the clouds where in former years it appeared to the average citizen to dwell. People had learned to understand that the ministers were ordinary human beings whose actions could be criticized not in a whisper, but openly and publicly before the entire country. *The government had lost its halo of mystery*—this was perhaps the greatest achievement of the revolution. People began to think of public affairs as comprehensible to everybody. Politics became an every-day matter.

The country had now a center—*the Imperial Duma.*

The Duma had no power to act, yet it had the power to criticize, to reveal evils, to enlighten the masses, to create public sentiment and public opinion. The Duma was the great tribunal whose word was sounding all over the country. The majority of the Duma were compromising with the government, yet even the conservative factions often became disgusted and burst out with an impressive criticism of the existing order. The minority, consisting of Social-Democrats, Trudoviki ("Laborites" moderate Socialists) and Constitutional Democrats faithfully and unremittingly exposed the inefficiency, the helplessness, the lack of real patriotism, the meanness and the cruelty of the administration. Not one point in the great realm of internal and foreign politics remained untouched, not one action remained unscrutinized. The press conveyed the Duma speeches to millions of readers,—the administration did not dare to stop their publication, though attempts were repeatedly made to do so. The country silently absorbed all the news of the proceedings of the Duma. The country was quiet. Nobody could tell how deeply the seeds were sinking into the heart of the people. One thing was clear: people learned to look upon the Duma as a legitimate institution, the defender of their interests, the expression of their wishes and ideals.

The existence of the Duma marked the radical difference between pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary times. The Duma was powerless in actual political life, yet powerful by the confidence of the people.

The period of silence was brief. As in the beginning of the first tide, the students started the movement. In the fall of 1910 Tolstoi, whose protest against the executions had touched the heart of every civilized Russian, breathed his last. In November, thousands of students protested against capital punishment in memory of Tolstoi. A wave of students' strikes rolled from Petersburg to Moscow, Charkov, Kiev, Odessa. The students organized manifestations, with flags bearing the inscrip-

tion: "Away with capital punishment!" The government imprisoned a number of students. This led to a new series of strikes in December, 1910, and in the early part of 1911. Revolutionary meetings were held and resolutions passed condemning the government.

In 1911 the labor-movement began to be felt in Russian public life. Sporadic strikes had never stopped since the revolution. Now they became more impressive, comprising great masses, totalling hundreds of thousands of workmen yearly. The strikes were originally of an economic character, the workmen trying to regain their losses of 1906-07. Soon, however, political strikes became quite frequent. The working masses manifested a spirit of unrest. They responded to current political events, they backed their press, they held meetings, they sent petitions to the Duma, and time and again they went on strike protesting against public outrages.

In 1913-14 the air was again full of electricity. January 9th was celebrated in Petersburg by a strike of 55,000 workingmen and by many thousands all over the country. April 4th, the anniversary of a shocking slaughter of workingmen in the gold fields of Lena, Siberia, witnessed a strike of 80,000 in Petersburg, 10,000 in Moscow and many smaller strikes in other cities. On May 1st the traditional May-day strike took place, spreading into the remotest towns of the country. Meetings were held, street demonstrations were organized, the slogans being: freedom of labor unions, an eight-hour work-day and a protest against militarism and the Balkan war. The number of strikers was in Petersburg 220,000, in Moscow 50,000, in Riga 50,000, in Charkov 15,000 and in other cities many tens of thousands. In June, 1913, a great protest strike against the prosecution of the labor press took place.

The movement widened in scope and became of an ever more revolutionary character. In the spring of 1914 it looked as if labor had lost all fear of the administra-

tion. The workingmen ignored the rules and regulations in the same spirit as in 1905. Street demonstrations of tens of thousands of workingmen became a permanent feature of Petersburg life. It must be noted that already in the spring of 1914 the government hesitated to slaughter its opponents in the manner of former years. Something had changed. Public sentiment had moved from the dead point. The intellectuals, encouraged by the rising tide, were lifting their heads. New hopes were growing. New beliefs refreshed the starving souls. In the summer of 1914 there were already collisions in the streets of Petersburg between the workingmen and the troops.

Revolutionary songs were no longer a manifestation of "bad taste."

# CHAPTER XXXIV

## IN AND AROUND THE DUMA

THEN the war came. The Russian government was not prepared. It had cherished imperialistic plans and it had given great care to the reorganization of the army after the Russo-Japanese war; yet it was not prepared. Russian autocracy was never prepared when it had to face grave national problems.

At the beginning of the war a wave of patriotism swept the heterogeneous country. Russians and Ukrainians, Poles and Jews pledged their loyalty and expressed their willingness to uphold the Fatherland, in the firm belief that now, when the integrity of the country was at stake, the government would certainly make concessions to the people. The government answered by closing all the labor organizations, by annihilating the labor press, by establishing censorship not only over military news but over all expressions of public opinion in the press, by arresting, trying and exiling to Siberia five Social-Democratic members of the Imperial Duma, by tightening the administrative grip over all free movements of the country and by a series of outrages against the Jews, who were accused in general of being German spies and of whom hundreds of thousands were driven out of the cities near the Western front. The readiness of patriotic elements to help their country in times of peril were met with a grim countenance and a menacing fist.

For a time after the beginning of the war, the success of the Russian arms in Galicia and the apparent perfection of the Russian military organization rendered the government self-confident. The country was in a state of confusion. The hardships of war and the great sac-

rifices demanded from the citizens seemed to leave no time or desire for political movements.

The summer of 1915 witnessed a change for the worse in the situation of the army. The retreat from Galicia and the fall of Warsaw, coupled with the defeats of the previous autumn in the Masurian marshes, showed that something was wrong with the fighting power of the nation. The soldiers were brave, that was beyond all question. The country, with the exception of small minorities, was in favor of a decisive victory. Yet the Russian army was retreating, and large portions of the Russian territory were in the hands of the foe. How was this possible?

A parallel with the Japanese war of 1904-05 was readily drawn. In the nine years after that war great efforts had been made to increase the fighting capacity of the army. The soldiers were better kept, better fed, better armed and were in the main better educated than had been the soldiers in Manchuria. Still, there were defeats. Was not the fault with the old administrative machinery?

Gradually it dawned upon the masses that the great world war was different from all previous wars; that it was not merely a war of governments conducted by armed men, but a war of peoples; that to hold out in those gigantic struggles, the entire nation must be organized and efficiently co-operating with the men at the front; that able and ardent activities in farming, industry, commerce, transportation were as necessary for victory as shells and rifles.

Slowly, but firmly this idea permeated minds in Russia. Little observation was required to conclude that Russia could not organize because the administration was in the way of the people. Every attempt at concerted action on the part of Russian citizens was blocked by the government as an act of sedition. How could the country mobilize to uphold the army?

The government was waging war simultaneously on two fronts: against the foreign enemy and against its own people. Was there any hope of stemming the tide of enemy armies overflooding the Fatherland?

The government, refusing to accept the aid of the people, whose combined energies were capable of making the momentous natural resources of the country available for war purposes, was practically serving the cause of the enemy. Was it not the patriotic duty of every fair-minded citizen to help overthrow the government and to put into office men enjoying the confidence of the people?

Thus the old mistrust of autocracy on the part of moderate elements, the old dissatisfaction of more radical groups, the old revolutionary glow in the hearts of the extreme left, received a new, powerful ally: the patriotic indignation of the people against an order endangering the very existence of the country.

Still, the country was downtrodden, terrorized, made speechless by the administration. The press was muzzled. The citizens were not allowed to express their sentiments. "There ought to be no politics," one of the administrators, the Minister of the Interior Chvostov declared in a public statement. "I pursue no politics, I have consciously given it up, and I cannot allow others to pursue it." This was said fifteen months after the beginning of the war, but this was the program of the administration during all those months of trial.

Active elements of the people had organized to help the army, to lessen some of the evils caused by reckless administration. The Zemstvos formed a National Union of Zemstvos to provide the army with food, clothes and other necessities. The municipalities formed a Union of Cities with a similar program. Big industry formed an Industrial Military Committee with branches all over Russia to mobolize industry for war purposes, to aid the placing of internal loans, to solve difficult problems of transportation, to adjust conflicts between capital and

labor, and generally to adapt the economic organism of the country to the requirements of war time. Those three organizations were supported by large portions of the population, including the workingmen who participated in the local and central bodies of the Industrial Military Committee. It was an open secret that without those organizations which practically eliminated the bureaucratic food-supply offices, the situation of the army would have been far worse. Yet the government looked upon them with hostile eyes, their actions were being interfered with, their decisions often ignored, their agents treated as meddlers. The Unions of Zemstvos and Cities and the Industrial Committee had to be extremely cautious for fear of being dissolved.

Under such circumstances, there was only one body that could voice the sentiment of the people, the Imperial Duma.

In the summer of 1915, the Duma assumed a tone of sharp, indignant opposition. The spirit of a deeply stirred country made itself heard through the utterances of the radical and even moderate deputies. The summer session opened on July 19th. Many of the deputies had come to the Tauric Palace from the front, wearing military uniforms. Many had returned from their work in the Red Cross units. There was something fresh, vigorous in the demeanor of the representatives of the people. The speeches of the day were made by Paul Milukov, the leader of the Constitutional Democrats, and Alexander Kerenski, the leader of the Trudoviki.

"This is the third time that we have met during this war," Milukov began. "The first time, at the very beginning of the war, the people gave us one mandate: we had to express, and express we did, the sentiment of high patriotic enthusiasm of all nationalities, all social groups, all political affiliations. Half a year later, in January, we came here with another feeling, the feeling of patriotic alarm. We then kept this feeling to ourselves. Yet in

closed sessions of committees we told the government all that filled the soul of the people. The answer we received did not calm us: it amounted to saying that the government could get along without us, without our co-operation. To-day we have convened in a moment of grave trial for our Fatherland. The patriotic alarm of the representatives of the people has proved to be well founded, to the misfortune of our country. Secret things have become open, and the assertions of half a year ago have turned out to be mere words. Yet the country cannot be satisfied with words. *The people wish to take affairs into their own hands and to correct what has been neglected.* The people look upon us as upon legal executors of their will."

This was the cue to the demands of the Duma. "The people wish to take affairs into their own hands." The people cannot tolerate an irresponsible government any longer. The crown has to form a new cabinet with the approval of the majority of the Duma.

This was not abstract criticism. It was a concrete demand. It showed a way out of the blind alley into which the government had driven the country. It preached no violent changes. It appealed to the supreme power to appoint ministers in accord with the representatives of the people in order to save the country. This could be done in one day, if the crown agreed to it.

It was a plain program, comprehensible to the masses, seemingly moderate, yet it marked a turning-point in the history of the Duma: for the first time since the coup d'état of 1907, the majority of the Duma demanded a government responsible to the Duma.

Another chord was struck by the same Milukov on the first day of the session; a problem was touched which played a remarkable rôle in the later development of events. Milukov raised the question *of treason* in the higher military ranks. "High up and low down," he said, "among the educated and among the illiterate peo-

ple, in the capital and in the remotest provincial towns, from one end of our great country to the other, rumors creep, rumors of perfidy, of treason. The rumors reach high, halting at no one. The highest command of the army has been transferred into other hands, yet it must be stated that a mere resignation of the war minister can satisfy neither the army nor the country. Only a *court investigation* could put an end to the persistent rumors and separate the innocent from the guilty."

This was an expression of the anxiety of the army which had seen its military commanders in action and had grown to believe that the victory of Russian arms was not the highest aim of the highest military authorities.

Still another point was touched upon by Alexander Kerenski. " Remember," he said, addressing himself to the Duma, " remember that the urgent need of the moment is not legislative work, but the creation of a new, sound governmental power, the creation of a new system of administration. When the nation is in danger, you must act promptly and with certainty. . . . *I appeal to the people themselves to take into their hands the salvation of the country and to fight for a full right to govern the state.*"

This was a direct appeal for a revolution. Events have proved that the attitude of the Duma created a profound impression in the country.

The Duma had now, for the first time since 1907, a majority in outspoken opposition to the cabinet. This majority was a result of careful negotiations between the various factions of the Duma. On August 22nd a formal coalition, known as the Progressive Bloc, was established, comprising the Constitutional Democrats, the Progressives, the Octobrists, the Center group and the progressive faction of the Nationalists, all together controlling a majority of votes in the Duma. The program of the bloc was far from satisfying the radical groups, such as the Trudoviki and the Social-Democrats, yet it contained

a number of reforms indispensable for the country, chief among which were a government responsible to the Duma ("a united government of persons who enjoy the confidence of the country and who have reached an agreement with the legislative bodies as to a program to be followed in the near future"); elimination of a double administration, military and civil, in matters not pertaining directly to military operations; amnesty for political prisoners and exiles; autonomy for Poland; gradual abolition of the restrictions upon the Jews; a conciliatory policy in regard to Finland; restoration of the Ukrainian press; restoration of the labor unions and abolition of prosecution of workingmen's representatives in the sick-funds; abolition of legal restrictions in regard to the peasants; a revision of the Zemstvo electoral law and of the municipal electoral law, etc.

A similar bloc of a moderately progressive character was formed in the Imperial Council, which had been far more conservative than the Imperial Duma.

Thus the legislative bodies presented a united front, which made their position stronger. Beginning July-August, 1915, the political movement of the country centered in and around the Duma.

The country responded. The Moscow city council passed a resolution demanding a responsible government. The Moscow Merchants' Association joined in. A national convention of representatives of industry and commerce—the leading body of Russian capitalists' organizations—passed a similar resolution. The Petrograd city council passed a resolution which reads in part: "The forces of the Russian people are inexhaustible, their resolution to continue the fight to a victorious end is unalterable, their confidence in the army and in coming victory is unshakable. Yet the way of those forces ought to be made clear, they ought to be headed by a government not guilty of the crimes of the past, powerful by the confidence of the people, capable of rising to that height of

statesmanlike wisdom which is required by the gravity of the moment. A severe retaliation ought to fall on the heads of those who have stained themselves with the filth of selfish greed and with the blood of their brethren." The city council implores the Emperor to create a government of new persons enjoying the confidence of the people.

Similar resolutions came from various parts of the country. *"A responsible government"* became the slogan of the time. It was a moderate program. It included reforms dictated by the urgency of the moment. It did not even mention universal suffrage. People accepted this program, because it seemed that the crown would accede to it. Was not the Progressive Bloc monarchic? Did it not express its loyalty to the dynasty? Was not the dynasty interested in saving the country?

The government replied by interrupting the session of the Duma and suspending it on September 3rd for an indefinite period.

# CHAPTER XXXV

## THE RISING STORM

STRANGE times followed. With every month, the disaster of the war made itself felt more keenly; with every month, the general unrest, the dark rumors, the confusion grew. And with every month the recklessness and stubbornness of the government increased.

The country was facing starvation, not because it lacked food, but because the food supplies were not properly managed. According to official estimates, the surplus of the four leading grains in Russia over the requirements of the army and the civil population was in 1915 nearly 500 millions of poods, in 1916 over 440 millions. The surplus of butter, sugar and other necessities was comparatively smaller, yet there was no real shortage of foodstuffs. Even assuming that the official estimates were too optimistic, it is evident that the country was sufficiently provided with food, and there was no real famine.

Yet the country suffered. The population was alarmed. Prices reached unheard-of dimensions. The poor were starving. The only reason was the inability of the government to cope with the situation.

There was no uniform policy, no plan, no concern about the future. The government paid fixed prices for its own purchases, but left the prices for private purchases free. The local authorities fixed prices of commodities each in its own district, yet the prices varied from town to town, and in large portions of the country there were no fixed prices at all. Rules and regulations as to distribution of foodstuffs were being issued by the Minister of Agriculture, by the Minister of the Interior, by the

Minister of Communications, by special conferences, civil and military, by the cabinet as a whole, by agents of the central government, by local governors, chiefs of police, etc., etc., and they often contradicted each other. Agents of the government, making purchases for the army in a certain district, would issue orders forbidding the export of foodstuffs from this district into other parts of Russia; oftentimes the district, being one of the granaries of Russia, would contain tremendous amounts of foodstuffs while the governmental purchases to be made in it were comparatively small, even trifling, yet the entire district would be closed for all the rest of the country. Russia practically split into a number of small units with no exchange of foods. All this chaos of haphazard experiments resulted in speculation, in frauds, in artificial raising of prices—and in sufferings for the civil population as well as losses for the government.

To bring order out of this chaos, the government would have had to listen to public opinion, to call a convention of specialists, with representatives of the various popular organizations, to work out a definite plan of a uniform policy, to engage the co-operation of the Zemstvos, the cities, the Military Industrial Committee, the co-operative organizations and every other private organization that would be willing to put its hand to this national task. It was not a problem of more or less freedom, of one or the other form of government. It was a task of saving the country from hunger and the army from defeat. So it was understood by everybody.

The government did the reverse. It declared a war of extermination against all social organizations engaged in the food problem. It closed the national office of the Russian co-operative organizations which were making every effort to help their members in hard times. It rejected all proposals to call a food convention. It used the recess of the Duma to issue laws on the basis of

Article 87, some of them having a direct bearing upon the war, such as taxation of war profits. It arrested workmen's representatives in the Military Industrial committees who were arbitrating between employers and employees, establishing public kitchens in poor communities, organizing labor unions and co-operative societies and trying to regulate the outbursts of strikes. It put obstacles in the way of the Unions of Zemstvos and Cities. To crown all these measures, in the summer of 1916, it ordered *that no conventions, conferences or congresses of whatever kind should be held.*

The order met with an outburst of indignation all over the country. The spirit of dissatisfaction was growing.

The government itself was restless. It felt its helplessness. The country was still silent, yet contempt and disgust met every step and every measure of the administration. The army was still loyal, yet things were being whispered in the trenches, and dark misgivings were spreading in the military ranks. The bureaucratic machinery was still intact, yet the task was becoming immense; the tide of requirements was overwhelming, and no success crowned the efforts of the Tchinovnicks.

A perpetuum mobile of ministers began. Premier Goremykin was succeeded by Premier Stuermer, Stuermer by Trepov and Trepov by Prince Golitzyn, with no apparent reason. From June, 1915, to the end of 1916 *twenty-one* ministers were dropped and new ones appointed in their places, all of them belonging to the same brand of bureaucrats and adhering to the same policy. The country watched this kaleidoscopic change of its rulers with amazement but with no hope. It had grown to understand that one bureaucrat was as good as another and that nothing could be expected from the old system.

A reactionary publication, the *Novoye Vremya,* wrote in November, 1916:

"There is no general management of a general cause. Every administrative organ feels itself called for to-day

only; it does not want to remember what was true yesterday, it does not take the trouble to guess what is coming to-morrow. The civil work of administration is being shredded into a series of casual disconnected orders; the ship of state is careening and creaking, driven hither and thither by the caprice of changing winds."

The country was growing ever more excited. The sessions of the Duma, renewed after an interruption of several months, were one continuous series of clashes with the administration. "We wish to save the country, the bureaucracy opposes,"—this was the message of the Duma to the country. People could see no reason for the opposition of the government but the desire to serve the enemy's cause. This assumption was confirmed by the rumors of treason.

Notwithstanding the prohibition of meetings, a conference of twenty-eight chairmen of province Zemstvos met on October 29, 1916, to adopt a resolution which expressed the anxiety of the people. "The tormenting and horrifying suspicion," the resolution says, "the sinister rumors of perfidy and treason, of dark forces working in favor of Germany to destroy the unity of the nation, to sow discord and thus prepare conditions for an ignominious peace, have now reached the clear certainty that *the hand of the enemy secretly influences the affairs of our state.*" It was known that representatives of the Black Hundred repeatedly visited the army headquarters urging the Tzar to conclude a separate peace in order to prevent a victory of the revolution. The revolution was the work of the Union of Zemstvos and Cities, they asserted, of the Military Industrial Committee, of the conferences of liberal organizations. "The radical parties," one of the black memoranda said, "desire a prolongation of the war to gain time to organize and prepare a revolution." It was known that Colonel Myasoyedov, a friend of the War Minister and a member of the general staff of the Tenth Army, was executed for treason. It

was known that General Suchomlinov, former Minister of War, was in the fortress of Peter and Paul, charged with treason.

Such was the mood of the country when on November 1, 1916, the Imperial Duma and Council convened after the summer recess. Professor D. D. Grimm, representative of the academic group in the Council, gave an adequate description of the situation. "There are moments in the life of nations," he said, "when silence is wrong, and we have no right to close our eyes to the conditions which alarm our country. I refer to the growing estrangement between the people and the government, to the deep discord between the government and thinking Russia, to the ever-growing mistrust which becomes the characteristic relation between those two factors of our national life. The *Russian people decidedly mistrust the Russian government,* and the Russian government just as decidedly mistrusts the Russian people. This is fraught with the gravest national danger. It cannot and ought not to be continued any longer. One cannot fight simultaneously on two fronts: with the external enemy and with the people in the country. One ought not to extinguish the power of the people which is of the greatest value in times of national trial. Does the government understand this? I assert that it understands neither the greatness of the moment, nor the concrete obvious problems it has to fulfil. *No co-operation with a government of this kind is possible,* and do not tell me that now is no time for raising such questions, that everything ought to be postponed till after the war. In this grave historic moment the Russian people need a government of honest and brave men, devoted to the constitutional order, equipped with a definite program and supported by a majority of the representatives of the people. This is necessary in order that the great goal should be reached with a minimum of sacrifices on the part of the people."

The majority of the Council agreed with this program.

In the Duma, Kerenski and Tchcheidze, the leader of the Social-Democratic group, openly spoke of an impending revolution. The country was ready, they asserted, the masses would take their fate into their own hands; from the Duma it was required that it should not block their way, that it should identify itself with the revolutionary people when the great upheaval came.

An unusual impression was made by the speech of the Duma deputy, Vladimir Purishkevitch, hitherto a notorious leader of the Black Hundred. The speech was a severe criticism of the inability, the indolence, the selfishness of the government. Purishkevitch pointed openly at the existence of a German party in the ranks of the Russian autocracy. "Now," he said, "the problem is not whether the government has confidence in the people, but whether the people can have confidence in the government. *The authority and the patriotism of the government are under suspicion.* The disorganization of the war is undoubtedly being created by the aid of a German party, which works with amazing persistency." Purishkevitch's accusations were especially characteristic of the moment, the man being connected with high officials and supposed to have "inside" information.

The political atmosphere became more heated every day. Strikes and street manifestation of workingmen in Petrograd and other cities had begun in October, 1916, and were growing to be a frequent occurrence. Zemstvos, city councils and all kinds of liberal organizations were sending greetings to the Duma, urging it to fight bravely for a responsible government. On November 4th, the Minister of War, General Shuvayev, and the Minister of the Navy, Admiral Grigorovitch, made in the Duma conciliatory speeches, Shuvayev saying that "the national defense imperatively demanded a co-operation of the ministers with the Duma." Both ministers were hailed by the Duma, by a number of merchants' associations, by the Union of Zemstvos, by mayors of various cities.

People believed it to be the beginning of concessions on the part of the government. It was not.

The administration continued its policy of suppression. The speeches of the radical and many moderate Duma deputies were not allowed to be published. The newspapers, including the *Novoye Vremya,* appeared with large blank spaces,—the work of the censor. The declaration of the Progressive Bloc, as it appeared in the newspapers, was a mockery: it contained about sixty lines of print and 200 lines of blank space! The Russian government was anxious to withhold the truth from the people, failing to see that large blank spaces in the moderate newspapers were of a more disquieting character than the most alarming news. The *Zemshchina,* the organ of the Black Hundred, wrote about the "most shameless and criminal speeches sounded at the mob-gathering in the Duma," and urged the government to apply violence. "If civil authorities are not sufficient," it urged, "there are military authorities which can act according to martial law. Let them step forth. Let them eliminate the Milukovs." On November 10th, Premier Stuermer was replaced by A. Th. Trepov, but people only shrugged their shoulders: there was not the slightest trace of difference between one man and the other. Stuermer was gone, but Protopopov, the most hated Minister of the Interior and the actual head of internal affairs, remained.

In November, a court prosecution was started against Milukov for his speech in the Duma. In December a reservist, who had been a journalist connected with the Black Hundred, made sensational revelations of his negotiations with the leader of the Black Hundred, Dr. Dubrovin, who had hired him for 200 rubles to kill Milukov. On December 9th, conferences of the Union of Zemstvos and Union of Cities, assembled in Moscow, were dissolved by armed police force. On December 10th, an officer despatched by the Moscow chief of police, appeared at the executive session of the

National Committee of the Military Industrial Committee to censor the proceedings. The meeting adjourned. The Duma made an interpellation in regard to these actions of the government. Minister Protopopov demanded that the Duma discuss the interpellation in secret session. The Duma disobeyed. The speeches of Tchcheidze and other radicals which had been suppressed by the censor, freely circulated in "illegal" editions; the police searched houses and arrested those who had been reading the speeches, yet Tchcheidze and Kerenski and other Trudoviki and Social-Democrats were continuing to appeal to the people from the tribune of the Duma. The speaker of the Duma, Rodzianko, often interrupted them, ordering them to leave the floor, yet their energy was unabated.

Once more the government resorted to its old measure of defense: it ordered the Duma to adjourn from December 17, 1916, till January 12, 1917. On the latter date, however, the Duma was not allowed to convene: the recess was prolonged till February 14th. Rumors were abroad that the Duma would be dissolved.

# CHAPTER XXXVI

## THE GREAT EVENT: A FREED NATION

TOWARDS the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917 the country once more represented *one solid front.* Practically all classes, groups, parties were unanimous in their opposition to the existing order and in the expectation of radical changes. Even the land-owning nobility arraigned itself against the autocratic system, whose main support it had been through all the years of reaction. Late in November a national convention of the nobility was held, which in strong and unequivocal language denounced the influence of dark, irresponsible forces over the affairs of the state and the church, and insisted upon the urgency of creating a government strong through the confidence of the people, and capable of co-operation with the legislative bodies. This was the most characteristic sign of the times. The government remained practically without support. The peasantry showed little unrest, but it was clear that they would not rise to the help of the decaying order.

As to the Black Hundred, this noisy group seemed to be rapidly dwindling. "Where are the monarchists (alias the Black Hundred)?" the reactionary Moscow *Courier* asks, at the end of 1916, and the paper answers: part of them, disappointed, "consciously and with apparent spite have severed all relations with the active monarchist movement. The remaining monarchist organizations have mostly lost their credit, and justly so, in the eyes of the population. They have grown mean, they have lost all ideal conceptions, they have become groups of private interests and private ambitions. The majority of them are so compromised through the actions of their

By I. Vladimirov.

REVOLUTIONISTS DESTROYING A PRISON
(March, 1917)

leaders, they have grown so odious in the eyes of the world that their impotence is apparent; nobody will respond to their appeal. . . . The thunderstroke has come, calamity faces us, and we prove to be helpless, pitiful and poor."

It is worth noting, this confession of a well-informed publication, that the "thunderstroke" *had* come. This was written more than two months before the final collapse of the monarchy in Russia.

On January 11th the papers brought news about the Duma deputies who were returning to Petrograd after the Christmas and New Year's vacation. One news item reads: "The halls of the Tauric Palace again stir with life. Every day new hosts of deputies are returning to Petrograd, notwithstanding the postponement of the session. Many deputies have visited the front during their vacation. All of them have things to tell about the prevailing sentiment in the country. A curious fact has been noted throughout the country: *there are no longer any conservatives*. Many of those who have been known as ardent members of the Black Hundred have renounced their former convictions in the most decided manner, going so far in their radicalism that they arouse amazement even among the most radical deputies. The idea of a responsible government has gained the support of circles which were hitherto considered the mainstays of the existing order. Under the pressure of life, those neophytes of radicalism *speak openly and frankly about the foundations on which the new order ought to be based.* In spite of the postponement of the session, *the population demands that the deputies be at their posts.* The deputies, therefore, deem it necessary to have *private gatherings* to exchange opinions on the current political problems."

Thus the population gave the members of the Duma *a clear mandate* to remain at their posts and fight for a new order. Everybody felt that it was no longer a question of years. Events were in the air.

In December the notorious Grigory Rasputin, the illiterate Siberian monk who had a sinister influence over the Tzar and had been more powerful in state affairs than the actual cabinet, was killed by members of the high aristocracy. This proved to the population that even in court circles there was a group hostile to the party in power.

The latter, however, continued its work of destruction. Late in December the elections to the municipality of Moscow, resulting in a progressive majority, were annulled. Early in January, Shcheglovitov, one of the deepest reactionaries, former Minister of Justice in the cabinet of Stolypin, and author of the Bailis case, was appointed speaker of the Imperial Council, " to tame the tempestuous old men of the upper chamber," as was said in Petrograd. On January 10th, Protopopov, the Minister of the Interior, called the attention of the military authorities of Petrograd and Moscow to the fact that the military censors were not efficient enough in deciphering the hidden meaning of certain political press communications " which appear to be perfectly lawful, but in reality contain attacks on the government." The minister suggested supplementing the military censors with experts from the offices under his jurisdiction. On January 20th the police raided the headquarters of the workmen's representatives of the National Military Industrial Committee; later all the representatives, with the exception of two, were imprisoned. The quarters of many other workmen's representatives in the local military industrial committees were raided and the representatives arrested. On February 7th the mayor of Moscow was informed that both he and the city council would be tried for political resolutions passed by the council.

Feverishly, blindly, the dying bureaucratic machinery was doing its work. Already a wave of political strikes was rising in February, becoming ever broader. The remaining two members of the workmen's faction in

the Military Industrial Committee, deeming the strike detrimental to the cause of national defense, ordered an appeal to the workingmen to stop the strike. The administration suppressed the appeal. It was as if some "diabolical hand" was doing this sinister work of ruin, as a Duma deputy expressed it.

Then came the collapse.

---

The history of the great revolution of February-March, 1917, is too recent to permit a critical survey; on the other hand, it is too fresh in the memory of all to need an elaborate exposition. What can be given in this connection is a brief outline of the most conspicuous features of this crucial moment in the history of the nation.

Those features can be thus summed up:

1. A mass-movement of the inhabitants of Petrograd, manifesting itself in demonstrations, processions, open-air meetings, dense crowds in the streets. The participants in those gatherings are not only workingmen, but practically all classes and groups of the population. The movement is actuated by hunger, starvation, due to the exorbitant cost of living, but it is sustained also by a spirit of political excitement which grows ever more acute.

2. The soldiers of the Petrograd garrison, the guard regiments and others, are loath to fire on the people. As the mass-movement grows, it becomes apparent that the army units are in accord with the entire country. Soon the revolutionary spirit spreads among the garrison, which begins to fraternize with the people. This marks the end of the old régime.

3. The mass-movement, like the movement of the soldiers, is not organized, has no leading center. Everything seems to have the character of a spontaneous outburst. It is only natural that *the Duma,* the only national

representation, becomes the center of the revolution and assumes leadership in the moment of crisis.

4. The more radical elements in the revolution lack perfect confidence in the democratic tendencies of the majority of the Duma. The radical elements are republican, whereas the majority of the Duma has hitherto been in favor of a constitutional monarchy. The radical elements, therefore, hasten to form their own center, the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, which becomes a momentous factor in the development of the revolution.

5. The revolution, remembering the failures of 1905-06, makes a clean sweep. It admits no compromise, arresting the most dangerous representatives of the old system, discharging others, breaking down the entire administrative apparatus of autocracy, including the monarchy, substituting everywhere authorities appointed by the people and acting with the consent of the people.

As to the course of events, it appears in the following order:

On February 14th * the Duma convened. On the same day a political strike was called by the Social-Democratic groups. General Chabalov, commander of the Petrograd military district, had given warning that strikes would be suppressed by military force. Nevertheless, on the day of the opening of the Duma more than 100,000 workingmen went on strike in Petrograd and 25,000 in Moscow. The strike lasted more than one day. The Petrograd workingmen intended to march to the building of the Duma to make a manifestation in favor of a new government, but were halted by armed police. Machine-guns were put on factory premises, and gatherings were fired upon.

* The reader must be reminded that the dates are quoted in this work according to the Russian calendar, which is 13 days behind the European and American calendar.

The Duma convened in a mood of fervent opposition. The commotion among the masses strengthened the hands of the deputies. The masses were becoming more restless every day. The food-crisis was acute. Long lines waited for hours at the doors of bakeries. Prices became prohibitive. For several days there was no bread to be had at any price. Starved, haggard figures were seen in the streets.

On February 21st part of the Putilov plant went on strike. The plant was closed down. In the following days the strike spread over many other factories. On February 23rd the electric street cars stopped for a few hours, the conductors joining the strike. On February 24th there were open-air meetings and processions on the Nevski Prospect, the main street of Petrograd. Speeches were made. The slogans, "Bread" and "Freedom," were sounded.

On February 25th the nervous tension was increased. The street cars stopped. The workmen's quarters were full of excitement. Nobody was permitted to come from the suburbs to the center of the town. Still, a crowd of about 10,000 workmen and students gathered on Nevski. There was a manifestation, and revolutionary hymns were sung. From the windows the marchers were greeted by cheering people waving white and red handkerchiefs. Soldiers were lined on the curbs. Cossacks rode through Nevski, but attacked nobody. The crowd was in a cheerful mood. Words were passed that the soldiers would not fire on the people. Soon the rumors became a certainty. New peaceful detachments of Cossacks arrived. The crowds greeted them enthusiastically. "Hurrah for the army!" was heard here and there. Meetings were improvised in the streets. Orators addressed the soldiers, summoning to unity with the nation, to a decisive battle against the old system. In several places shots were fired, yet the people were confident that this was the work of policemen.

February 26th was the bloodiest day of the revolution —the second bloody Sunday after January 9, 1905. The streets were crowded with all classes of people, including wounded soldiers. The crowds were peaceful. Military patrols were posted on the street corners, but they did not interfere with the movements of the crowd. About 3 P.M. automobiles with machine-guns ran through Nevski, and immediately the rattle of shots was heard. A panic followed. The crowds ran in all directions. On the corner of the Sadovaya Street and Nevski Prospect a detachment of soldiers was placed, firing along Nevski in both directions. Volleys were fired also from roofs, from towers where machine-guns had been placed. After the Nevski was cleared, the soldiers and police began to fire along the streets crossing the Nevski. Hundreds were killed. The indignation was great, but there was no fear. Towards evening the streets were again filled with dense crowds. In the barracks of the various regiments the excitement was intense. The soldiers were confronted with the possibility of firing on their brothers. The general sentiment was to refuse to murder.

On this Sunday, in various suburbs of Petrograd, workingmen were already electing representatives to the Council of Workmen's Deputies.

On the night of February 27th an appeal of General Chabalov was issued, ordering the workingmen to return to their work on Tuesday and giving warning that those who continued to strike would be sent to the front. This appeal the workingmen did not permit to be posted in the workmen's quarters. On Monday, February 27th, the revolutionary enthusiasm swept the entire city. The military patrols had been removed, the administration could not rely on them any longer. The passages from the suburbs to the center were clear. Throngs were marching, among them many soldiers, red banners in their hands. At noon the entire Volynski regiment declared itself on the side of the people. Delegations of this regi-

By I. A. Vladimirov.

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS IN PETROGRAD
(March, 1917)

ment went to the barracks of other regiments to urge them to join the people's cause. Groups of soldiers and workmen seized passing automobiles, to use them for the purpose of transporting rifles and ammunition. The automobiles, filled with soldiers and decorated with red flags, aroused a wild enthusiasm. The number of soldiers joining the revolution grew every hour. A crowd of soldiers and workingmen opened the Viborg prison (the famous "Cross"), freeing the inmates, among whom were the workmen's representatives of the Military Industrial Committee. Another crowd opened the House of Preliminary Imprisonment ("Predvarilka"), freed the inmates and set the building on fire. Later the fortress of Peter and Paul was taken. Military processions marched through the streets carrying red banners and singing revolutionary songs. Part of the troops still remained loyal to the old government, firing from roofs and trying to close the Liteini bridge. But it was apparent that their number was decreasing.

A delegation of 25,000 soldiers who had joined the revolution went to the building of the Duma. Many other delegations and crowds of civilians and soldiers gathered in and around the Duma. All eyes were turned to the only existing national center. On the previous Saturday, February 25th, the members of the Duma had had a joint session with the Petrograd city council, representatives of workmen's organizations and a number of other persons well known in the community. It had been decided not to await the decisions of the government, but to form immediately a number of committees and provide for the needs of the population. On Sunday M. V. Rodzianko, speaker of the Duma, telegraphed to the Tzar at army headquarters:

"The situation is serious. There is anarchy in the streets. The government is paralyzed. Transportation, food and fuel supplies are in a state of total confusion. The general dissatisfaction grows. Disorderly shooting

is going on in the streets. Parts of the troops fire on each other. It is necessary to immediately authorize a person enjoying the confidence of the country to form a new government. No delay is permissible. Any delay is equivalent to death. I pray to God that in this hour the responsibility does not fall on the Bearer of the Crown."

The reply was an order of the Tzar adjourning the Duma till some time in April. The order was received on Monday, February 27th, when the revolutionary army and the revolutionary population were already gathering around the Duma. The Duma decided to stay. Rodzianko made a final appeal to the Tzar. He telegraphed:

"The situation is becoming worse. Measures ought to be taken immediately; to-morrow it will be too late. The last hour has struck for the fate of the Fatherland and the Dynasty to be decided.

"MICHAIL RODZIANKO."

No reply from the Tzar was forthcoming.

The pressure of the revolutionary army on the Duma was in the meantime becoming stronger. The soldiers declared they were ready to take the Duma under their armed protection. The members of the Duma, Kerenski, Tchcheidze and Skobelev (Social-Democrat) addressed the soldiers in front of the Duma building. Skobelev announced that the old system was no longer in existence, that the Duma was having a session to decide how to establish order. He urged the people to organize, to act in solidarity, to keep order, to commit no violent acts against the defenders of the old régime, but to convey them to the Duma and hand them over to the new people's authorities. "Freedom demands discipline and order," he said.

At 3 P.M the soldiers around the Duma were notified that the Duma had decided to form *a Provisional Committee* to handle the situation. The Provisional Committee issued the following appeal to the population:

"The Provisional Committee of the members of the Imperial Duma, aware of the grave conditions of internal disorder created by the measures of the old government, has found itself compelled to take into its hands the re-establishment of political and civil order. In full consciousness of the responsibility of its decision, the Provisional Committee expresses its trust that the population and the army will help it in the difficult task of creating a new government which will comply with the wishes of the population and be able to enjoy its confidence.

"MICHAIL RODZIANKO,
*"Speaker of the Imperial Duma.*
"February 27, 1917."

The news was received with joy by the tense crowds which filled the streets, standing shoulder to shoulder. The Duma building was already guarded by revolutionary military patrols.

The ministers of the old system showed no signs of life. They disappeared. Only Prince Golitzyn informed Rodzianko that he had handed in his resignation.

Late in the afternoon Shcheglovitov, the President of the Imperial Council, was arrested by the revolutionary people and was placed under custody in the building of the Duma.

In the evening the first formal session of the Council of Workmen's Deputies took place. The deputies were elected by the workingmen of various factories and Socialist organizations. Chairmen of the meeting elected were the Duma deputies Tchcheidze, Kerenski and Skobelev. The Council issued an appeal to the people which reads in part:

"The fight is still going on: it must be continued to a victorious end. The old system must be completely overthrown and give room to a government by the people. In this lies the salvation of Russia.

"To finish the struggle successfully, in the interests of democracy, the people must create their own powerful organization.

"The Council of Workmen's Delegates, holding its session in the Imperial Duma, makes it its supreme task to organize the people's forces and their struggle for a final securing of political freedom and popular government in Russia.

"We appeal to the entire population of the capital to rally around the Council, to form local committees in the various boroughs and to take over the management of local affairs.

"All together, with united forces, we will struggle for a final abolition of the old system and the calling of a Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage."

On Monday evening the Union of Journalists published the first *Bulletin* giving information about the progress of the revolution.

On Tuesday, February 28th, the revolutionary army increased. Almost the entire garrison was already on the side of the people. The old government ordered new regiments from other cities to come to Petrograd. They arrived singing the Marseillaise. On the roofs there were still policemen firing machine-guns, but they were being gradually removed and arrested by the revolutionary people. In the course of the day the following administrators of the old régime were arrested: Protopopov, Minister of the Interior; Stuermer, former Premier; General Kommissarov, known for his pogrom activities; Dobrovolski, Minister of Justice; General Chabalov, commander of the Petrograd military district; Golitzyn, head of the cabinet, and many others. All were placed under custody in the Duma building.

On the same day, the Winter Palace, residence of the Romanovs, was taken by the revolutionists. The dis-

arming of policemen and police officers and the substitution for them of a popular militia was in full progress.

On Wednesday, March 1st, the diplomatic representatives of England and France recognized the Provisional Committee of the Duma.

Moscow, Charkov and Tzaritzyn pledged their support to the Provisional Committee.

The *Bulletin of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies* published an article headed: "Should the Romanov dynasty remain in power?" The article emphasized the necessity of overthrowing the Romanovs and establishing a democratic republic in Russia. To secure a democratic control over the army, the Council issued an order to the soldiers to elect soldiers' committees in every unit, the committees to have the stores of ammunition in their command; the soldiers had to keep discipline in the ranks and to obey the officers when on duty, the Council urged. When not on duty, however, they were supposed to be equal to the officers. The order was received with enthusiasm by the revolutionary army. On the same day Rodzianko, in the name of the Provisional Committee, issued an order prohibiting the officers from disarming the revolutionary soldiers.

Numerous other officials of the old system were arrested.

On Thursday, March 2nd, the negotiations between the Duma and the Workmen's Council as to the formation of a provisional government and its program, came to a successful conclusion. A provisional government was formed with Prince G. E. Lvov, President of the Union of Zemstvos, as premier.

On Thursday, March 2nd, Tzar Nicholas II signed his abdication in favor of his brother Michail, and on Thursday, March 3rd, Michail abdicated, appealing to the people to support the Provisional Government.

Monarchy in Russia was overthrown. The dream of generations became true.

# APPENDIX

## TABLE I

### Growth of Principal Cities

(According to V. I. Pokrovski, in *Russia at the End of the Nineteenth Century,* published by the Ministry of Finance)

| Cities | Number of Inhabitants | | Increase of the Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1867 | 1897 | |
| St. Petersburg | 539,471 | 1,267,023 | 136.7% |
| Moscow | 351,609 | 1,035,664 | 194.8 |
| Warsaw | 180,657 | 638,208 | 253.0 |
| Odessa | 118,970 | 405,041 | 240.0 |
| * Lodz | 32,437 | 315,209 | 872.0 |
| Riga | 77,468 | 282,943 | 264.6 |
| Kiev | 68,429 | 247,432 | 261.7 |
| Charkov | 52,016 | 174,846 | 236.0 |
| Tiflis | 60,776 | 160,645 | 163.3 |
| Vilna | 69,467 | 159,568 | 129.7 |
| Tashkent | 80,000 | 156,414 | 95.5 |
| Saratov | 84,391 | 137,109 | 62.5 |
| Kazan | 63,084 | 131,508 | 106.9 |
| * Ekaterinoslav | 19,908 | 121,216 | 508.0 |
| Rostov-on-Don | 29,261 | 119,889 | 310.0 |
| Astrakhan | 42,832 | 113,001 | 163.8 |
| * Baku | 13,992 | 112,253 | 702.0 |
| Tula | 53,739 | 111,048 | 106.6 |
| Kishenev | 94,124 | 108,796 | 15.6 |
| * Libau | 10,227 | 64,505 | 540.0 |
| Ekaterinodar | 9,504 | 65,697 | 591.0 |
| * Tzaritzyn | 8,456 | 55,967 | 562.0 |
| * Ivanovo-Vosnesenk | 1,350 | 53,949 | 3,896.2 |
| Sebastopol | 8,218 | 50,710 | 517.0 |
| Vladikavkaz | 3,358 | 43,843 | 1,205.6 |

* *Lodz* is the center of the textile-industry in the Polish Provinces; *Ekaterinoslav,* the center of the coal-districts in Southern Russia; *Baku,* the center of the oil-industry in the Caucasus, on the Caspian Sea; *Libau,* a port on the Baltic Sea; *Tzaritzyn,* a port on the Volga; *Ivanovo-Vosnesensk,* the center of the textile-industry in Central Russia.

## TABLE II

### Development of Industries in Russia, 1887-1897

(According to Official Data)

| Industries | Number of Factories in 1897 | Value of the Product (in Thousands of Rubles) | | | | | Number of Workmen Employed | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1887 | 1890 | 1893 | 1896 | 1897 | 1887 | 1890 | 1893 | 1896 | 1897 |
| Textiles ... | 4,449 | 463,044 | 519,365 | 621,929 | 837,598 | 946,296 | 399,178 | 433,320 | 497,940 | 545,920 | 642,520 |
| Foodstuffs .. | 16,512 | 375,286 | 391,947 | 399,700 | 627,815 | 648,116 | 205,223 | 203,000 | 216,834 | 239,899 | 255,357 |
| Animal Products .. | 4,238 | 79,495 | 74,391 | 78,422 | 117,473 | 132,058 | 38,876 | 39,684 | 44,228 | 63,484 | 64,418 |
| Wooden Products ... | 2,357 | 25,688 | 33,377 | 38,876 | 91,258 | 102,897 | 30,703 | 36,101 | 39,913 | 75,411 | 86,273 |
| Paper ..... | 532 | 21,030 | 23,804 | 27,529 | 45,386 | 45,490 | 19,491 | 27,389 | 33,803 | 35,328 | 46,190 |
| Chemicals .. | 769 | 21,509 | 29,750 | 39,560 | 57,139 | 59,555 | 21,134 | 27,791 | 28,382 | 36,402 | 35,320 |
| Keramics .. | 3,413 | 28,965 | 32,543 | 34,472 | 70,046 | 82,590 | 67,346 | 72,361 | 75,474 | 90,551 | 143,291 |
| Mining and Smelting ... | 3,412 | 156,012 | 202,894 | 249,168 | 339,170 | 393,749 | 390,915 | 426,635 | 461,455 | 489,038 | 544,333 |
| Metal Products ... | 2,412 | 112,618 | 127,920 | 171,140 | 283,973 | 310,626 | 103,300 | 109,982 | 132,008 | 182,514 | 214,311 |
| Other Industries .. | 935 | 50,852 | 66,672 | 74,201 | 121,106 | 117,767 | 41,882 | 48,467 | 52,867 | 59,928 | 66,249 |
| Total .... | 39,029 | 1,334,499 | 1,502,663 | 1,734,997 | 2,590,964 | 2,839,144 | 1,318,048 | 1,424,730 | 1,582,904 | 1,818,475 | 2,098,262 |

## TABLE III

### Number of Workingmen in Russia in 1897

(According to Pogoshev, *An Account of the Number of Workingmen*)

| Occupation | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agriculture | 1,969,717 | 753,173 | 2,722,890 |
| Mining | 155,079 | 8,765 | 163,844 |
| Smelting | 41,203 | 2,556 | 43,759 |
| Industries | 2,013,505 | 377,271 | 2,390,776 |
| Post, Telegraph, Telephone | 5,603 | 43 | 5,646 |
| Transportation | 350,848 | 14,165 | 365,013 |
| Commerce in general | 212,625 | 43,322 | 255,947 |
| Day Laborers | 809,651 | 285,433 | 1,095,084 |
| Total | 5,558,231 | 1,484,728 | 7,042,959 |

## TABLE IV

### Concentration of Workingmen in Factories (1879-1902)

(According to Pogoshev)

| Groups of Factories | 1879 | | 1890 | | 1894 | | 1902 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen |
| Employing 100-499 workingmen | 979 | 219,400 | 1,131 | 252,100 | 1,136 | 252,700 | 1,746 | 386,200 |
| Employing 500-999 workingmen | 164 | 113,900 | 182 | 120,900 | 215 | 143,500 | 359 | 245,900 |
| Employing over 1,000 workingmen | 86 | 163,000 | 108 | 226,200 | 117 | 259,500 | 261 | 626,500 |
| Total | 1,229 | 496,300 | 1,421 | 599,200 | 1,468 | 655,700 | 2,366 | 1,258,600 |

## TABLE V

### Concentration of Workingmen in Cotton Manufactories

[Data cover fifty provinces of European Russia]

(According to Tugan-Baranovski, *The Russian Factory*)

| Years | Factories Employing over 5,000 Workingmen | | Employing 1,000-5,000 Workingmen | | Employing 500-1,000 Workingmen | | Employing 100-500 Workingmen | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen | Number of Factories | Number of Workingmen |
| 1866 | — | — | 26 | 40,844 | 27 | 18,059 | 115 | 23,097 | 168 | 82,000 |
| 1879 | 1 | 8,946 | 40 | 83,583 | 44 | 32,591 | 118 | 28,212 | 203 | 153,332 |
| 1894 | 8 | 54,981 | 60 | 119,013 | 48 | 33,462 | 108 | 27,050 | 224 | 234,506 |

## TABLE VI

### Wages of Russian Factory Workers, 1900-1901

(Data collected by Factory Inspectors covering 12,702 industrial concerns with a total of 1,275,102 workingmen)

| Groups of Workingmen | Industries | Number of Workingmen | Yearly Wages (in Rubles) |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | Cotton | 372,136 | 180 |
| II | Wool | 127,796 | 172 |
| III | Silk | 24,774 | 178 |
| IV | Flax | 71,515 | 140 |
| V | Mixed Fabrics | 26,320 | 227 |
| VI | Paper | 66,713 | 218 |
| VII | Wooden Products | 73,964 | 189 |
| VIII | Metal Products | 235,785 | 342 |
| IX | Mining and Smelting | 127,970 | 206 |
| X | Animal Products | 46,633 | 198 |
| XI | Foodstuffs | 71,042 | 187 |
| XII | Chemicals | 30,430 | 260 |

## TABLE VII

### Distribution of Land and Cattle Among the Peasants in the Province of Samara

[Data cover 28,276 families totaling 164,146 persons. Table shows the inequality in land-holding notwithstanding the communal ownership on land]

(According to Ilyin)

| Groups of Peasants | | Percentage of the number of families in each group to the total number of families | | Number of dessatin tilled by each family | Percentage of the land tilled by each group to the total area of land | | Percentage of persons in each group using modern machinery |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poor ... | Owning no cattle | 20.7 | 37.1 | 2.1 | 2.8 | 8.0 | 0.03 |
| | Owning 1 piece of cattle | 16.4 | | 5.0 | 5.2 | | 0.1 |
| Middle | Owning 2-3 pieces of cattle | 26.6 | 38.2 | 10.2 | 17.1 | 28.6 | 4.5 |
| | Owning 4 pieces of cattle | 11.6 | | 15.9 | 11.5 | | 19.0 |
| Wealthy | Owning 5-10 pieces of cattle | 17.1 | 24.7 | 24.7 | 26.9 | 63.4 | 40.3 |
| | Owning 10-20 pieces of cattle | 5.8 | | 53.0 | 19.3 | | 41.6 |
| | Owning 20 pieces and more | 1.8 | | 149.5 | 17.2 | | 62.1 |

## TABLE VIII

### Distribution of Land Among the Various Groups of Peasants in Three Counties of the Tauric Province (1891)

[Table shows the inequality in land-distribution, notwithstanding communal ownership on land]

(According to Ilyin)

| Groups of Peasants | Land tilled by each family (in dessatin) | Percentage of the number of families in each group to the total number of families | | Average area of land tilled by each family (in dessatin) | Total area of land tilled by each group (in dessatin) | Percentage of land area tilled by each group to the total area | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | None ..... | 7.5 | 40.2 | — | — | — | 12.1 |
| II | Not over 5... | 11.7 | | 3.5 | 34,070 | 2.4 | |
| III | From 5 to 10 | 21.0 | | 8.0 | 140,426 | 9.7 | |
| IV | From 10 to 25 | 39.2 | | 16.4 | 540,093 | 37.6 | |
| V | From 25 to 50 | 16.9 | | 34.5 | 494,095 | 34.3 | |
| VI | Over 50 ..... | 3.7 | | 75.0 | 230,583 | 16.0 | |

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